- SUPER
Supermodel/ shoe designer Nicolette Bell

- PROPERTY
Continued demand from call centers pushes office rent up

- WORLD / A8
Asian financial capitals likely al-Qaida targets

- NEWS / A7
Manila Hotel Corp. buys Fraport's stake in Piatco for $200M

After Enrile switch, Gordon wants turncoats punished

By TJ Burgonio

MANILA, PHILIPPINES—Lawmakers and local officials who abandon current parties before November next year "commit ... [a] kind of betrayal," Senate President Pro Tempore Richard J. Gordon said on Friday.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Licuanan quits SBMA chair; won't say why

By Jil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

PAMPANGA: Licuanan III yesterday resigned as chair of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, barely one year after he was appointed to the post by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Saturday, August 27, 2005 • 28 pages / vol. 29 / no. 260

2 more sign to impeach

Pilot: Garci could have hidden in jet's cargo

By Armando N. Nonoy

THE PILOT of the aircraft that reportedly spirited Virgilio Garcillano out of the country denied yesterday that he transported the former election commissioner to Singapore on July 24.

But Capt. Jardine Soares, who piloted the Learjet of the Subic-based Royal Air Charter Inc. (Subic Air) to Singapore admitted to a court-panel investigating Garcillano's departure flight that it was not impossible for someone to hide in the plane's cargo.

Two persons can hide among 500 suitcases but the navy officer (inside a crate) became a dead duck inside the belly of the plane, Soares said.

At the initial hearing of the inquiry being conducted by the Department of Justice and the Bureau of Immigration, Department of Foreign Affairs officials said Garcillano arrived in Singapore on July 24 and left a day later for an unknown destination.

The information had earlier been relayed to the DFA by Singapore's foreign ministry. But during the hearing, DFA lawyer

HOW TO SELL JUST ABOUT ANYTHING TO ANYBODY
Did President Arroyo get tips on how to sell herself another program of government from global direct selling expert Tupperware? Its boss and CEO Rick Goings (4th from left) and his wife Susan (3rd from left), along with members of the boss' pipe, a courtesy call on Ms Arroyo on Friday.

Rep. Villar, NP pivotal for final 'yes' votes

By Michael Lim Ubac and Philip C. Tubeo

THE NUMBERS game continued to be played in the House yesterday, with two more lawmakers endorsing the amended impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The "yes" votes of Laguna Rep. Benjamin Agarao (Lakas ng Isang Kilusang Mayon) and Bataan Rep. Romeo Encarnacion (Lakas) put to 79 the number of signatures (1/3=80).

Pro-impeachment stalwarts Tupag Pulong Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano and Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla are now working on the "clearing away" of Liberal Party Rep. Cynthia Villar to convince other administration lawmakers to endorse the impeachment complaint.

Cynthia Villar said her husband, Sen. Manuel Villar, favored the Nacionalista Party two years ago. On Thursday, the senator said his wife had been "thinking

GMA appeals for truce for 'economic survival'

By Clarissa G. Arenales

PETE for political opposition bent on unseating her for alleged lying during last year's elections, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday appealed for a truce to secure the Philippines' "economic survival" as oil prices surged to new record levels.

"I call on a determined consensus among our national leaders, regardless of party, sector and persuasion – to get on the same boat and steer it forward, not pull in different directions or worse, boring holes in the hull," the President said in a statement.

Ms Arroyo issued the call after crude oil prices hit a new record high of $66 per barrel the other day.

Officials have warned that surging oil prices would cut into economic growth, raise inflation and deplete the country's international reserves.

"The longer our political turmoil lasts, the deeper the hurt inflicted upon the public," she said. "This is the time for our nation to act decisively on an issue of economic survival and the time to act is now," she added.

"A common mind will help us keep our fiscal house in order, strengthen the sales area in terms of affordable food, medicine and educational expenses for every family, demonstrate to the world that we are a nation worthy of sustained confidence and support ... to keep up the flow of investments and jobs," Ms Arroyo said.

The President is facing impeachment over vote-rigging in

CLEANUP CLASS
An army of about 1,000 Civic Welfare Training Service students, officers and faculty members of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines are out to transform the scenic shores of Manila Bay around with rakes and shovels. Their lovely lineup at Roxas Blvd. yesterday is a striking indication that environmental campaigns at PUP's "Human Rainbow" – which is made up from demonstrations to cleanups – are finally getting the attention they deserve. (Story on Page A-11.)

GMA meets 12 House allies for loyalty check

By Jil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday canceled at the last minute a scheduled visit to Malolos City to meet with 12 House allies in Malacañang.

A source in Congress said the meeting was a "virtual loyalty check by a President who appeared to be worried about the lack of administration lawmakers who had signed the impeachment complaint against her.

The group was reportedly shepherded by Ausejo Rep. Rodolfo Plaza, who chairs Kampi, the President's party.

Plaza was recently tagged as engineering the withdrawal of endorsement of PL Uniflon from the Road Users Tax. (The President ordered the cancellation of the release after members of the mi...

WHAT OIL DID FOR SAUDI ARABIA

RP sits on top of 25-M ton nickel mine

SUBIC as young Ou Philippines as a province is sitting on top of a 25-million-ton deposit of nickel ore, enough to make stainless steel, that could do for the impoverished Philippines what oil has done for Saudi Arabia, some mining executives say.

But persuading the world's top miners to spend the cash to unlock vast reserves in a politically volatile country where corruption and bureaucratic red tape are low and investors face opposition from indigenous people and the powerful Catholic Church, will not be easy.

"I compare nickel to the effect oil has had on countries like Norway and Saudi Arabia, which have a substantial portion of the world's oil resources," said Jon Moon Peterson, senior vice president of Toronto-listed mining firm Corex Gold Corp.

The Philippines has 25 million to 28 million tons of nickel in its soil, or at least a quarter of the world's known nickel laterite resources, estimates Corex Gold, whose local unit owns a 40-percent share in a nickel project here.

Benjamin Philip Romualdez, president of the country's Chamber of Mines, says there are more

SWS: Half of lawyers say judges accept bribes

By Vale Carmona

ALMOST half of the country's lawyers know of judges that accept bribes, but most of these lawyers are afraid or unable to respond to the situation, they prefer to keep mum than expose the rot, this is according to surveys results released yesterday by the Social Weather Stations.

In a sampling of 400 lawyers at least five riders, 49 percent of them said they were "aware" of assignations in their locality who are on the take, but only eight percent of these lawyers had the courage to report the bribery to the SWS said.

Lawyers were randomly selected—100 each from four

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SATURDAY, AUGUST 27, 2005

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Victim ignored Iraq ban, says DFA

By Nikko Dizon
and Jerome Aning

FOREIGN Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo yesterday ordered an investigation into the entry to Iraq of worker Federico Santos, who was killed in an ambush on Wednesday, despite the government's prohibition to Filipinos against working in the war-torn country.

Romulo instructed chargé d'affaires (CDA) to Iraq Nicolito Ilo, days, to speak with Santos's employer, Luzon Technology, to find out how Santos managed to enter Iraq since last month.

"The Philippine Government has never lifted the temporary ban on the deployment of Filipinos in Iraq, and the presidential order has not changed. Santos was by this mean worse act of violence on three Filipinos," Romulo said in a statement.

Romulo said he is saddened.

"Federico could have his life in this terrible incident," Romulo said.

But the Department of Labor and Employment said Santos, who was around 10 years old, married, and a native of Olongapo City was not undocumented overseas worker who entered into Iraq from the United Arab Emirates in defiance of the government ban.

Nevertheless, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said, the government would work for the release of benefits for Santos's family from his employer and for the repatriation of the remains back to the Philippines.

Sto. Tomas, a representative of Luzon Technology, who said Santos was deployed in the UAE in 2002. POEA records showed that his contract with his previous employer, Modern Technology International, expired in March 2005.

His membership with the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration also expired last March.

"It was apparent that Santos had entered the UAE border but this now is in Iraq without proper documents," Sto. Tomas said.

She added that undocumented overseas Filipino workers were not entitled to welfare benefits being provided by OWWA or non-governmental OFWs and their families. Santos's late, however, could claim insurance and other insurance benefits due them from his employer, Luzon Technology, she said.

Santos, a noncommissioned officer for contractor Luzon Technologies, was killed Wednesday along with two Iraqi guards when their truck was hit by an improvised explosive device in the northern oil center of Kirkuk shortly after leaving Arab base on their way to Baghdad, the CBS said.

Two other Filipinos—Pedro Dalde and Roderick Tayo—were wounded and flown by the United States Army to Baghdad, it said.

Ten Filipino workers were in the convoy the CBS said, adding that there had been no word about the other Filipinos.

Embassy appealed for patience from the family of the slain worker to overcoming and repatriating him to Santos, citing the difficulties and danger involved in traveling between Kirkuk and Baghdad.

The Philippines banned deployment of workers to Iraq after insurgents abducted Filipino truck driver Angelo de la Cruz in July 2004.

De la Cruz his life, Manila was forced to grant the kidnappers' demand for the early withdrawal of to small peacekeeping contingent Iraq,—a decision strongly criticized by Washington and other allies, but applauded whereas.

A second Filipino, accountant Robert Tarongoy, was also abducted by Iraqi militants. He was freed in June after almost eight months in captivity.

Some 6,000 Filipinos are employed in US military camps across Iraq, mostly as cooks and maintenance personnel. Many workers slip into Iraq through a neighboring country like Jordan. With an AP report

LOVELY GIFT: Candle for Federico who was killed when Iraqi insurgents ambushed a convoy transporting workers of LUZON technic firm Kirkuk. At right, Cecilia Santos, 45, comforts granddaughter Lyka, 4, as they sit in front of a photo of her husband.

Jobless for 4 years, 5 children to feed

By Allan Macatuno
PhilStar Central Luzon Desk

OLONGAPO CITY—Federico Santos, 48, the Filipino worker killed when insurgents attacked a convoy of workers in Iraq, used to tell his wife Cecilia that he would rather die working abroad than die going hungry in the Philippines.

Santos was jobless for four years and had five children to feed and send to school.

In July 2004, he was given an opportunity to work as a rigger in another who assists crane operators) in Iraq. His children think wrong because the job is dangerous.

On Thursday Santos and two Iraqis were killed when insurgents ambushed a convoy carrying workers of an American company base in Iraq's northern city of Kirkuk. Two other Filipinos were hurt in the attack.

Cecilia, 45, was hysterical when she heard the news on Thursday night. Their grieving children and relatives gathered in the family's home in Barangay Pag. Sina as news of his death spread.

His relatives and friends, built the house for his family through his savings abroad.

"I just don't know how to move on now that he is gone. He is my sole strength but I already lost him," Cecilia told the Inquirer yesterday.

Relatives placed Santos's framed photographs on altar in the house and lit four candles for him.

Relatives, five children, Dave, 20, Rona, 21, Jessie, 20, Cesely, 16, and Darwin, 13—gathered around the living room on Friday morning, anticipating calls from concerned government agencies.

Cecilia, although her eyes swollen, was surprisingly calm.

She said it would take her time to recover from the death of her husband.

"He was supposed to come home in October. He wanted to have a surprise to my birthday on October 31," said Cecilia. "He is a great husband."

Cecilia, who is under treatment for diabetes, said she last talked to her husband Tuesday morning.

"He told me to take care of my health and to exercise. He reminded me to take my medicine," she recalled their last telephone conversation.

Cecilia said she will no longer go to Jordan because "it is dangerous" but he said his money was not enough to extend his call," she said. "I was not able to say how much I love him and that I wanted him (to come) home."

Cecilia said a representative from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration has told her that her husband's body would be brought back to the country next week.

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Oslo urges gov't, Reds to resume peace talks

NORWAY has urged the Philippine government and communist rebels to resume peace talks amid the rise in fighting a 36-year insurgency, an official said yesterday.

Vice Norwegian ... Arnak visited Manila early this week to urge the government to offer "the ... additional concessions ... to discuss the possible resumption of formal talks," said Jens Iversaens, ... political adviser on the peace process.

The Norwegians in ... Philippine officials that the Marxist umbrella, National Democratic Front, which represents the rebels in the talks, was open to ... attending.

"We will look at the ... the press and ... the ... and ... the ... Norwegian government," Iversaens said. "It is very worth considering ... if it will advance the peace process."

Norway has ... hosted the talks since February 2004 and hosted at least three ... rounds.

Formal talks, which ... and for late August 2004 were postponed by the MNLF when the United States refused to remove the rebels from its terror list.

Rebel negotiators, who live in exile in The Netherlands, said the talks would remain suspended ... the Philippine government ... to the dismissal of the underground Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, and party founder Jose Maria Sison from the US and European ... AP

NEWSBRIEFS

Bomb parts in PAL cargo

EXAMINATION revealed to be shipped to Pakistan was discovered by authorities yesterday at the domestic cargo area of the Philippine Airlines at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, police announced. Five kilos of detonating cords and blasting caps sealed in carton were found when ... opened ... LBC box addressed to one Ernesto Penaco at Puerto Princesa, airport security chief, ... Israel Ino. Angel Morales said in a report. The vendor was identified as a ... in Metro Pasay at San Pedro, Laguna. "Preliminary ... gathers said the bomb components were meant likely to be used for illegal fishing and not for ... purposes. Chief Supt. Isidro ... Gerilla, head of the PNP Aviation Security Group (PASG), did not rule out the ... to ... Mike Dizon

Bali bomber alive

JAKARTA—Indonesian police said today a key suspect in the Bali nightclub bombings who ... a Philippine embassy report identified as dead ... this month, was now believed to still be alive. National police spokesperson Ansyaad Mbai said Indonesia's colleagues in the Philippines "have now confirmed by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) that suspected militant Umar Patek was brought to ... where Patek is a senior member of the group and ... hiding with the group's ... Patek is the only ... ... the October 2002 Bali bombings, which killed 202 people. Philippine security forces said earlier this month they had announced arrest they ... Patek in the Philippines, but ... of Umar Patek on a ... had near the town of Cotta Cotta Simpul ... AFP

JPE seen as no threat

SENATE President Franklin Drilon yesterday said Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. is not planning to fire Senate presidency and remains an opposition ... a vs Macapagal. "I'm ... about what Pimentel ... from the PDP-Laban ... Drilon told the ... ...

Worst over for dengue outbreak, says DOH

Public warned vs 'second wind'

By Christine F. Reyes and Norman Bordadora

FIRST THE good news: The number of dengue cases in the country's bad peaked from June to August and could be on their way down, Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said yesterday.

And now the bad news: The public should watch out for a possible "second wind" of the deadly, mosquito-borne disease.

"The 'D' curve is down," Duque told reporters in a press conference.

With 19,728 cases documented as of Aug. 13 nationwide, he said there was no indication that the number would be twice the 19,000 cases recorded in 2004 by the time the dengue season ends in October.

Dr. Eric Tayag, chief of the National Epidemiology Center, earlier projected that cases would reach 36,000 by October, noting that 3000 to 500 new infections were being recorded weekly.

Dengue cases usually double from the previous year's number every two to three years. The country last experienced a dengue crisis in 1998 when around 40,000 people were infected.

"This year, we peaked in June, July and August," he said. "I think (the cases) would go down already."

Despite the positive outlook, he warned the public against recklessness, especially with neighboring countries like Singapore and Thailand also battling dengue.

In Thailand, he said there were a total of 33,000 cases from January to July. Singapore had only 7,000 cases as of July but the number rose a startled increase from the 3,224 cases recorded last year, he said.

"It looks like it's happening to the whole of Southeast Asia," he said.

Duque urged the public to continue searching and destroying "breeding mosquitoes, the so-called "day biters" carrying the dengue virus. They breed in clear and stagnant water.

He also encouraged residents to use mosquito nets, repellents and come up with other measures to drive away the insect. Sprinkling "Abate" on stagnant water can also kill larvae. But the powder is quite expensive at P700 per sachet.

Despite national government hospitals to admit emergency cases even if patients could not pay for laboratory fees or purchase certain medicines or supposities.

Interior and Local Government Secretary Angelo Reyes yesterday called on governors and mayors of areas with high dengue-related fatality and incidence rate to establish hotlines in government hospitals under their respective jurisdictions.

In a memorandum to all local executives, Reyes also asked that stringent patients be treated and managed in local government hospitals for free during the "dengue season."

"In the light of this circumstances, there is an expressed need to improve the system for dengue case management, as well as efficiency of services rendered to patients," he said.

Reyes said the possible increase in the incidence of dengue cases nationwide had placed a strain on the services provided by the Department of Health for both confirmed and unconfirmed cases.

He urged governors and mayors to improve several case management and services of dengue patients.

Reyes also called on the governors and mayors to provide the provincial, city or municipal epidemiology surveillance unit of regular weekly reports of dengue cases.

He also urged local government officials to immediately request fresh frozen plasma through the Dengvaxia Risen Assistance Center of the DOH to replace diminishing supplies of platelet concentrates.

Health department figures show that a total of 10,977 dengue cases were reported from January to July this year, compared to 10,117 cases reported for the same period last year.

The same report showed that northern Mindanao recorded the highest number of dengue cases with 2,326, followed by the Zamboanga peninsula with 1,526; central Visayas with 1,398; Metro Manila with 1,379; Soccsargen with 1,044.

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AND THEN there are two more: Laguna Rep. Benjamin Agarao makes it official during the procession (hemmed in by like-minded colleagues like Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano). The other signatory, Manila Rep. Rodolfo Bacolod, did not show up. (photo by AUTHOR)

THE NUMBERS are shaping up, and that's something to write about. Representatives Robert Jaworski Jr. and Gilbert Remulla at a pro-impeachment press conference in Quezon City on Friday. (photo by AUTHOR)

2 more sign to impeach

Front page, A1

of signing" the complaint.

Cayetano and Remulla described the camera-shy congresswoman as "a force on her own" and a "pillar of Congress." They said that once she signed the impeachment complaint, it would be easy to meet the required 79 signatures.

"It could be instant as a ground level if there is no formal party stand," said Remulla, also of the NP who had earlier joined four other "young guns" in endorsing the complaint.

Cayetano said Cynthia Villar was expected among senior members of the House.

"We can't underestimate [her] drawing power," Cayetano said. But he stopped short of saying that apart from the numbers, she could provide the logistical support in an opposition-trapped for funds.

The congresswoman has been listed since 2000 as the wealthiest member of the House, with P503.2 million in net worth and no liabilities.

'The end is near'

But House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles paraphrased Frank Sinatra's song "My Way" to convey that he was unimpressed. "The end is near and they may have the final curtain."

Nograles said that despite yesterday's ten additional signatures, he was "very confident" that the prolongation-camp would not be able to convince the required one-third of the 208-member House to back its cause.

The Justice committee is to resume its impeachment hearings on Tuesday and is expected to decide on the two remaining "prejudicial" questions—whether an amended complaint can be regarded as a new complaint and whether the initial complaint filed by Oliver Lozano constitutes a bar to the two subsequent complaints.

Should the committee decide to junk the amended complaint, the prosecution camp needs to muster support at the plenary to overturn the committee's decision and automatically transmit the complaint to the Senate for trial.

The administration reportedly wants the complaint junked before Mr. Arroyo leaves for New York on Sept. 12 for a United Nations conference.

'Desperation'

According to Nograles, the prolongation camp is "desperate" because "the numbers are not in sight while the voting on the case is nearing." He said he expected the vote to be held on Tuesday.

"So their desperation is reflect more lawmakers, they are resorting to spiritualities, a smear campaign, exercises rites, garlic wreaths and probably even voodoo magic," he said, adding:

"I think there have been enough debates on the issue already, so the [justice committee] chairman [Representative Rep. Simeon Datumanong] will probably call for a vote."

Nograles downplayed the additional signatures of Bacani and Agarao, saying the opposition had a long way to go to get the 79 votes.

"It's been more than a month since they claimed they had more than 70 signatures. But [not July 25 until now, they have just added] only six votes[—]from 41 to 47. That's a slow boat to China!" he said.

'We will survive'

But Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, the lead impeachment prosecutor, said, "Of course, there will be more [signatures]. That [Tuesday] is also our target [date]. [The majority is] trying to kill the complaint, but we are going to survive."

Enrile said that among those signatories to endorse the complaint were members of the Liberal and Nacionalista party.

"I can confirm that," he said. "[The LP and NP members who had signed] are working for additional signatures. If I were in the Palace, I would read Senator Villar's words [concerning his wife] very carefully."

Manuel Villar is a member of the Wednesday Group of senators who are allied with Vice President Noli de Castro.

Last Saturday, the impeachment prosecution team issued a statement protesting that the opposition would adhere to the rules of unconditional succession if Mr. Arroyo were sentenced in an impeachment trial.

Enrile said then that the statement was issued in compliance with the request of some lawmakers who were thinking of signing the impeachment complaint.

Asked yesterday if those lawmakers were the NP congressmen, Zamora merely laughed and said: "Senator Villar is planning for higher stakes."

The NP bloc

Initially described as a "two-man party," the NP now counts 18 congressmen, including three from the party-list sector, among its members.

But so far, only three—Representatives Cayetano, Remulla and Justin Chipeco—have signed the impeachment complaint.

The pivotal role of the Villars was mentioned at the press conference yesterday in Quezon City wherein the endorsements of Agarao and Bacani were announced.

Reporters said Cynthia Villar was making the rounds of NP members to check whether the whole party would be amenable to break ranks with Ms Arroyo.

Remulla said that in the absence of a party stand, the Nationalistas would "vote according to their conscience."

For he said he supported Pampanga Rep. Oscar "Jerry" Rodriguez and Cebu Rep. Eduardo Gullas to stick with the administration coalition because they represented provinces where Ms Arroyo made a strong showing in last year's election.

Only more than a year into her six-year term, the President stands accused of rigging the 2004 vote, hiding her real assets and properties, receiving bribes from "jueteng," condoning human rights violations and entering into disadvantageous economic accords.

She has denied any wrongdoing.

'Glimmer of hope'

At the press conference, Agarao said he had endorsed the impeachment complaint so that Mr. Arroyo would have a chance to clear her name.

He said his conclusions in the fourth district of Laguna were in full support of his decision.

Bacani, a brother of Novaliches Bishop Teodoro Bacani, did not show up, but sent his endorsement of endorsement to the House secretary general.

Cayetano admitted the mounting pressure for the minority to produce 21 more signatures as the complaint.

But as long as there is a "glimmer of hope that we can still get twenty, we will not withdraw from the impeachment process," he said.

After a standstill, the numbers game zoomed up last Tuesday when six were added to the 41 endorsements of the impeachment complaint.

But on Wednesday, Rep. Edcelo Magnayon of the party-list group Association of Volunteer Educators withdrew his signature.

'Redeem yourself'

On Thursday, Magnayon's cousin, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., expressed disappointment over his withdrawal, saying it was in the country's interest that the impeachment process "go forward."

Rattling the alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) called on him to "redeem himself" by re-affixing his signature on the impeachment complaint.

ACT chair Antonio Tinio reminded Magnayon in a statement sent to media offices that the education sector had overwhelmingly demanded the President's impeachment.

"We're deeply disappointed with Magnayon's sensitive Magnayon's decision," Tinio said. He lamented that an education and education-sector representative would be the first to make a turnaround on the impeachment complaint.

But Magnayon, who had earlier claimed that P5.5 million was offered to him in exchange for not signing the complaint, said his endorsement on July 22 was a result of his dispute that some administration lawmakers had used to "unduly influence" his decision.

"Upon reflection, I realized that lobbying on both sides and the horse-trading that goes with this is just and pained all our political process that I, as a non-traditional politician, continue to be uncomfortable with those processes until now," he said in a statement.

"Therefore, I must now do link this unfortunate experience with my decision on the impeachment complaint, for one should not have anything to do with the other, especially if I find that the impeachment complaint is of no merit at all, and does unworthy of my support."

With a report from Alexis Pajo

GMA meets 12 House allies . . .

Front page, A1

ing Lakas outnumbered that 4-strong camp when pushing the lion's share of fund releases.)

Assuages Rep. Jose Solis, one of those in the rival cabinet session with Ms Arroyo yesterday afternoon, confirmed that she had asked about the status of the impeachment complaint.

"[But] the dame's self as not to sign. I was even expecting that she'll tell us, 'Stick with me and you'll get lavish gifts,'" Solis said.

But he said the President had asked him about talks that he was poised to join the pro-impeachment camp.

"I told her (that) that, no as-not going as now on it yet and that it is not far down the road. Second, my colleagues are mahalak (persistent)," he said.

At ease

Solis said the President appeared comfortable and at ease during the meeting mostly marked by small talk.

But he added that he could not say what she discussed with the other congressmen during their separate meetings.

Solis said he was cooking sanchiyal about the President's inviting lawmakers to Malacañang to discuss the impeachment complaint.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye concurred that there was nothing improper about Mr Arroyo's touching base with lawmakers through a phone call or meeting at the Palace.

"The President is the leader of the executive branch, and she has to discuss with the legislature and other branches of government," Bunye said in a briefing.

He was evasive when asked about the exact duration of the breakfast event, where the President was to look the launch of a socio-civic project, "Bonbon Bisita."

He also feigned ignorance of the meeting between Ms Arroyo and the lawmakers.

Pilot: Garci could have hidden in jet's cargo

Front page, A1

Domingo Generoso Jr. told the panel that the information did not indicate whether Garcillano had arrived at the city-state on board the Indira Air Learjet.

No passengers

"There were no passengers, only three crew members," Arroyo said, adding that apart from himself, co-pilot Capt. Wilfredo Bautista and mechanic Bernie Jappel were on board flight RPC-9426.

He said the purpose of the flight to Singapore was to fix the plane's anti-jet system.

Garcillano is at the center of the controversy surrounding the wiretapped phone conversation between Mr. Arroyo and an election official concerning cheating in the 2004 presidential polls.

He is facing arrest for his failure to appear before a Senate joint inquiry into the "Hello, Garci" tapes.

Asked by panel members whether he saw Garcillano on the plane, Ilarraz said: "I know of no passenger named Garcillano."

No inspection

He said it would not have been possible for Garcillano to take the flight without the necessary papers because they would have been arrested by Singapore immigration and customs officials.

The leasing of the panel led by Senator Juan Ponce Enrile family die lies has also showed that the Garcillano did not undergo the usual inspection by airport authorities before it took off for Singapore.

Immigration officer Raymund Pilar admitted that he only examined and sealed on the authenticity of three passports and the "general declaration" submitted by a Subic Air "liaison officer" before signing the flight documents.

Pilar said it had been "a practice" that members of flight crews were not required to personally join the examination of immigration officers before being allowed to board an outbound flight.

Neither did he board the Learjet to find out whether the persons indicated on the flight manifest were the only ones inside the aircraft before it flew out, he said.

Ilarraz confirmed Pilar's statement. He said that before a plane was allowed to fly, it should have been cleared by immigration, customs and quarantine, the Airport Security Group, and the Air Transportation Office.

De los Santos said the panel was considering an on-site inspection of the Learjet.

Subic Bay chair and president Feyen Alvarez, said to be an ally of Ms Arroyo's, did not attend yesterday's hearing. Assign Undersecretary Franklin Drilon sent a representative.

2nd letter

DFA spokesperson Gilbert Asuque yesterday said it had received a second letter from the House seeking more details on Garcillano's flight.

He said the details included how Garcillano flew into Singapore and the kind of passport the latter used.

Asuque said the DFA received the letter signed by Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla, chair of the House inquiry into the "Hello, Garci" tapes, last Monday.

He said the DFA had immediately the Philippine Embassy in Singapore to request the needed information from the host country's foreign ministry and Late Emo, Philippine charge d'affaires (CDA) in Kuala Lumpur, to find out if Garcillano had also been in Malaysia.

"CDA Cruz, who is in Manila for home consultations, has been instructed to relay all relevant information to the committee of Congress regarding Mr. Garcillano," Asuque said.

He said the DFA had also instructed the Philippine consulate in New York to find out if Garcillano was in New Jersey, as Ilarraz testified.

Continued on page A2

Remulla under siege

At the House, administration lawmakers reportedly want Remulla stripped of the chairmanship of the "Hello, Garci" inquiry for signing the impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo.

They also reportedly want the investigations terminated following the Supreme Court's recent decision banning the introduction of tape recordings as evidence in court proceedings.

"Well, let the members decide," Remulla said. "My official stand is: I can still act as an impartial presiding officer. After all, this is not the impeachment [proceeding]. It is the inquiry into wiretapping, which will sometimes on Garcillano."

Remulla said Garcillano was still being held in contempt by the joint inquiry and was still subject to the warrant of arrest issued by the House. With reports from Nikko Dizon and Michael Lim Ubac

SWS: Half of lawyers say judges accept bribes

From page A 1

cities—in Metro Manila, Baguio City, Cebu City and Davao City. They were met by the SWS for face-to-face interviews between November 2003 and January 2004.

The respondents were asked if they were aware of a case in their city or province where a judge had taken a bribe.

Findings

Those who answered yes were allowed to give several reasons on why they would rather keep mum. The poll gathered 11 main reasons.

Fifty-six percent shared the belief that they could not prove anything anyway; 29 percent cited fear of reprisal, while 25 percent thought nothing would be done about it.

Not reporting the bribery was already "standard practice," according to 14 percent, while 13 percent felt they just "don't want to betray anyone."

Seven percent said they would rather not blow the whistle lest they "spend much" in the ensuing legal battle.

For some, it's also embarrassing (6 percent) or too small a thing to be bothered with (5 percent). Others simply didn't know whom to report it to (3 percent), or they didn't mind since they're not involved in the case (1 percent), or simply didn't regard the matter as a personal concern (1 percent).

These findings were part of the 2003-2004 surveys SWS conducted on the state of the judiciary and the legal profession, presented yesterday at its Quezon City head office by lawyer Marlon Manuel.

Judges' survey

The survey of the lawyers had a parallel project involving judges—and the results of the twin polls were consolidated in 90 tables that were discussed by Manuel.

For the magistrates, the SWS mailed questionnaires to all judges in the regional trial court level and below, totaling 1,460 nationwide. One batch was sent in November 2003 and another in January 2004. Some 889 magistrates or 61 percent sent back valid replies.

The SWS survey also asked the question: "How often do lawyers include bribe money in the fees they charge clients?"

Half of the lawyer-respondents supported the "perception" that to win a case, grease money had to change hands.

Five percent of the lawyers said "Very often" while 10 percent said "Often." Twenty percent answered a more qualified "Sometimes," while another 15 percent said extra charge was done "occasionally."

Bribes passed on to clients

When judges were asked the same question, half or 51 percent said they believe lawyers factor in bribe money, in varying degrees, when they finally bill clients.

Still, both the lawyers and the judges considered themselves as people who command respect in the community.

Ninety-six percent of the judges said they believe they get "much" to "moderate respect" from the public. The same high opinion was shared by 94 percent of the lawyers.

No to local dialects

Another finding was the strong rejection—from both lawyers and judges—of the use of Filipino or local dialects in court. In each grouping, 76 percent or three-fourths of the respondents disagreed with suggestions that the native tongue be used in official proceedings.

This language preference was already reflected in similar surveys concerning the judiciary that were conducted by the SWS in the mid-'90s.

Asked to comment on the results of the survey, Supreme Court Information chief Ishmael Khan said "Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. has always encouraged lawyers aware of any corrupt activity in court to come forward."

No proof

Khan added: "The fact that talks of corruption abound shows that the lawyers are not aware of incidents of corruption themselves, or they only heard it from somebody else, or have no proof about it. I have been talking to lawyers who told me that they will not hesitate to report incidents of graft. It is easy to destroy the reputation of any judge, because in the decision he makes, one party becomes happy, or in some cases, both parties are unhappy with the decision. Sometimes, lawyers blame the judges for their legal lapses."

Asked to comment on the unpopularity of the use of Filipino or local dialects in court, Khan said: "A lot of legal terms cannot be translated to Filipino. It's a problem in communication." ***With reports from Armand N. Nocum***

RP sits on top of 25-M ton nickel

From page A 1

rank the Philippines as potentially the world's fourth or fifth largest nickel miner.

No nickel-and-dime venture

At a current world price of about $14,850 a ton, the country holds between $297 billion and $371 billion worth of nickel—enough to pay the $70 billion national debt more than four times over.

The Philippines has caught the attention of top nickel producers like BHP Billiton Ltd./Plc., Canada's Inco Ltd. and China's Jinchuan Nonferrous Metals Corp., though none have yet committed to taking exploration projects through to production.

Japan's Sumitomo Metal Mining Co. Ltd., the world's ninth-largest nickel producer, was the first major to start production in recent times when its $180-million Coral Bay plant on Palawan began producing nickel powder in March.

But more foreign money is needed if the country is to improve greatly on last year's output of 16,973 tons—equivalent only to about 1.4 percent of world refined nickel output.

"The largest stumbling block for a nickel project is the large capital requirement, which often exceeds $1 billion, which is difficult to raise for high-risk projects in the Philippines given the sometimes turbulent political environment in the past," Petersen said.

The government has taken steps to attract investors. A Supreme Court ruling last year cleared the way for foreign ownership of mines and prompted Manila to identify 24 priority mining projects, five of them focusing on nickel.

Tricky negotiations

"The big mining companies are here and more of them are coming because they have seen how things have changed," said Romualdez of the Chamber of Mines.

Analysts say tricky negotiations between foreign companies and the existing owners of mining concessions are an obstacle to investment, while lower ore grades—meaning miners must extract more ore, at higher cost, for the same amount of metal—make the Philippines less attractive than countries like Chile.

But geologists say Sumitomo Metal Mining's Coral Bay project, which derives nickel powder from the old ore stockpiles discarded by local firm Rio Tuba Mining Corp., show that low grades can be mined successfully using new technology.

Edwin Rillon, a geologist at the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, said Sumitomo and its partners had been able to mine laterite ore with just 0.9 percent to 1.3 percent nickel using the high-pressure acid leach technique.

Old mines

"Before, these were considered uneconomical by Philippine mining companies. They were just digging for high-grade ore, or those with nickel content of above 1.3 percent," Rillon said.

China's top steel maker Baosteel and nickel leader Jinchuan have pledged $950 million to revive an old nickel plant on Nonoc island in the south of the country.

Benguet Corp., of which Romualdez is president, is in exploratory talks with world No. 2 producer Inco about a project in Zambales.

Crew Minerals owns 40 percent of Aglubang Mining Corp., which sees potential for mining 2 million tons of dry nickel ore, containing about one percent nickel, on central Mindoro island.

Petersen said the project needed $300 million to $400 million to bring into production a plant that would initially produce 20,000 tons of nickel a year, and another $1 billion to boost output to between 50,000 and 60,000 tons a year. ***Reuters***

IN THE KNOW

LAST April, President Macapagal-Arroyo disclosed that the Philippines has the third largest nickel deposits worldwide. She said this could serve as the country's passport to true development and global wealth.

Nickel, with the symbol of Ni, is a silvery shiny, metallic element that takes on a high polish. It belongs to the iron group, and is hard, but can be extended or shaped by hammering or by pressure. It can also be drawn out into wires.

About 65 percent of the nickel consumed in world today is used to make stainless steel and other rust-resistant alloys. It is also used to make armor plates, burglar-proof vaults, ship propellers, kitchen supplies, plumbing, robotics, rechargeable batteries. In the United States and Canada, nickel is used in five-cent coins.

For years, the bulk of the nickel deposits is believed to be in Surigao del Norte, particularly in Nonoc Island where it is reported to account for about 83 percent of the country's total nickel deposits.

Latest results of studies have shown huge nickel deposits not only in Surigao del Norte but also in other parts of Mindanao, Palawan, Zambales, Mindoro, Samar and Negros. ***PDI Research***

GMA appeals for truce for 'economic survival'

Front page 1

the May 2004 elections after an audiotape was leaked in which a woman sounding like her apparently tells an election official to fix the outcome of the presidential election.

Since it resumed session late last month, Congress has devoted its energy to debating three impeachment complaints against Ms Arroyo.

A joint directive of the 220+ members House of Representatives would compel the body to spend the rest to the 23 member-bosses for it.

Ms Arroyo, who has denied any wrongdoing, wants Congress to concentrate on passing key legislation to shore up the government's revenue base to lessen the country's dependence on expensive debt. The proposed 2006 national budget would devote a third of the total to debt service.

In a statement, the President said that government resources were under "heavy strain" as a result of the "combined weight of rising oil and net debt payments."

Hardest hit

Saying the poor were the "hardest hit" by the strain in government's resources, Ms Arroyo underscored the need for the government to "get the fullest value of every peso we spend so that we can help poor families acquire such infrastructure, maintain essential life services, and push the economy up to fill in its many jobs."

President Arroyo urged that the country act now before it was too late, "before inaction is because of our callousness and complacency is tomorrow disaster."

Explaining the President's renewed call for unity, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said she was "calling attention to the fact that we're really facing a serious problem."

Political distractions

Bunye contended that the grave problem of high oil prices was shared by many nations, including the Philippines.

Ms Arroyo has been calling for various measures to deal with the oil price problem including energy conservation, finding alternative resources and possibly even passing emergency measures if the situation becomes too grave.

"We have to get together and work together so that we could be effective in addressing our problems," Bunye said in a news briefing.

Asked whether Ms Arroyo's appeal for the need to end the political turmoil was in reference to her wish for the immediate resolution of the impeachment case filed against her in Congress, Bunye said: "The message to his or work together. We know we have political issues, we have political distractions."

"The less distraction we have, the better we would be able to address other important problems," the press secretary said. With an AFP report

'Serbisyo Muna' not a Palace PR blitz–Pagcor

A NEW government poverty alleviation program, dubbed "Serbisyo Muna," is not a media or Malacañang public relations offensive to fight off the most political crisis hounding the Arroyo administration.

Efraim Genuino, chair of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) which is the most visible supporter of the project, said "Serbisyo Muna" is a timely initiative of the government due to the economic problems the country is facing.

Genuino said he is leaving it to the Chief Executive's critics if they think the new poverty alleviation program is just a Malacañang PR offensive.

"Through the program, we will be able to coordinate the charity services [conducted by various government agencies]. Ang inuuna ganun, pagkain, inom, ay sinisiguro namin na ang mga [Pagcor] employees ay sino ni President [Cheap] candidate, kasi, ang ating [made available on orders of the President]," Genuino said in the press conference held at the Casino Filipino in Pasbuquez City Thursday night.

The project was launched in Malabon on Thursday.

The government will intensify the anti-poverty program in Metro Manila but aims to make it a nationwide effort.

"Some of the core projects of Serbisyo Muna' will be the construction of community based supermarkets, automotive stores, police outposts, school buildings, low cost housing, and the introduction of supplemental feeding and emergency livelihood programs in local communities," Pagcor said in a statement.

Genuino, reportedly one of the closest allies of Ms Arroyo and her husband, Pasig Congressman Jose Miguel Arroyo, also expressed hope that with Serbisyo Muna, the country's loading would be encouraged to set aside politics and concentrate on providing the much needed services to the Filipino people.

Surely, even in public, Genuino also urged the media to lend its support to the government's program.

And in emphasis to his appeal for unity, Genuino dressed in a dark suit, urged everyone in the room to stand up and hold hands in a chain led the singing of Serbisyo Muna's theme song.

Among those who obliged and rushed up singing, holding hands, and swaying in the middle were PEZPO Chairman Mike Garcel, Public Works Undersecretary Rafael Yabut, Pasig city ambassador Ebenezer "Chubbi" Bing and mediamen seated around the conference table.

Pagcor recently figured prominently in the news after the organization's archbishop Oscar Cruz, an anti-gambling advocate, revealed that the gaming corporation would introduce a game called "Bingo Combo" to replace jueteng next month.

In a statement, however, Pagcor categorically denied it is implementing or has plans of implementing the Bingo Combo game, now or in the future.

"We would like to clarify that the Bingo Combo game is only one of hundreds of proposals offered to Pagcor for evaluation and possible implementation," Pagcor said.

Pagcor said there are no rules that plans to push through the Bingo Combo game, adding that the proposed game never reached its board for appropriate action.

According to Pagcor, it was approached last year by the proponent of Bingo Combo who offered their equipment and technology. The proposal went through the normal evaluation process and was given the opportunity to have a 30-day testing period prior to final evaluation. However, the testing period never materialized.

Pagcor said the document that was shown to the media recently was a copy of the "draconian guidelines" which is standard to the evaluation process.

"Due to the sensitivity of games such as the Bingo Combo, discussions like these are especially important because it outlines the mechanics inherent to and required by the games. It also ensures that everyone is in synchronizing on how the testing should proceed," it said.

Pagcor, however, said that should Bingo Combo be deemed acceptable for implementation, the terms of the operational guidelines will be used as part of the supplemental materials submitted by for their evaluation.

"We would like to stress, however, that the document was presented very early in its infancy to appease the Bingo Combo game," Pagcor said.

Nikko Dizon

Licuanan quits SBMA chair; won't say why

Front page 1

In a statement, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Licuanan tendered his resignation yesterday. It would take effect at the end of the month.

"President Arroyo accepted his resignation with regret and sincere appreciation for his valuable service to the country," Bunye said.

Ms Arroyo appointed Licuanan, former president of Ayala Land Inc., as SBMA chair on Nov. 1, 2004 to replace Felicito "Ting" Payumo who had held the post since 1998.

In a telephone interview with the Inquirer, Licuanan confirmed he has resigned as SBMA chair and as presidential adviser on the Subic-Clark Alliance development program.

Asked for his reasons in leaving the government, Licuanan said he would rather defer to Malacañang's official announcement on his resignation.

Presidential Adviser for External Liaison Bunye Dan said that SBMA Administrator Felicito Salonga would also be leaving his post. Antonio would be appointed member of the Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

A top Malacañang official said Licuanan just did not have the "taste for bureaucratic life" when he handed in his resignation to the President.

LICUANAN is leaving a vacuum

Adjusting to gov't way

"Hardnegs says (He was not comfortable). He could not adjust to the rigid and time-driven processes of the bureaucracy which, on his bright, was too conservative to bring from the corporate sector," the official said. "He was still adjusting from being retired and then suddenly he had to adjust to a government way of doing things."

Before joining the government, Licuanan, 60, had served as director and president of ALI since 1988. He was senior managing director and member of the management committee of Ayala Corp. Licuanan also held various top positions in the Ayala group of companies.

The reason said Licuanan gave himself a "very short-time frame" to make a difference in the agency. "From the start, he only wanted to set the direction for Subic but it turned out the time he gave himself to do the job was too short," the source said.

Personal matters

Another source said Licuanan had been telling his close associates that he had other things to do, commitments that he had to make after retiring from Ayala Land.

The source said those were mostly personal matters that "are serious do-when they'll really leave their office. The source added that Licuanan wanted to have a vacation because the Subic office, though set amid a tourist resort complex, was just too stressful for his taste.

But a top SBMA official said Licuanan left his post because he could not handle the heavy workload at the SBMA and his role as presidential adviser.

Licuanan was appointed presidential adviser on Subic-Clark development on Aug. 19, 2004.

The development of the Subic-Clark growth corridor is among the 18-point agenda of Ms Arroyo's administration.

As presidential adviser, Licuanan was in charge of developing Subic and Clark into the best logistics, transport and warehousing hub in Southeast Asia. He also oversaw the functions of the Subic Conversion Directing Committee, Clark Development Corp. and SBMA with regard to programs that have a direct impact on the joint development of the industrial and freeport agencies. With a report from Allan Monsod/Inq. Phil Central Luzon Desk

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After Enrile switch, Gordon wants turncoats punished

Front page 1

until last week.

In a bid to curb this common but revolting practice, administration Sen. Richard Gordon has filed a bill penalizing political turncoats and opportunists in the country's political system.

Gordon lamented that a political party essentially is rendered useless if the officers the people choose to be government positions, but later stained by "rampant party-switching" in the system.

"This practice is so rampant that sustaining party allegiance is already taken for granted," he said in his explanatory note of Senate Bill No. 2082.

Still independent

Only last Wednesday, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile completed his switch from opposition to independent to administration when he announced that he had forged a "working coalition" with the Senate majority. Enrile's announcement resulted in the Senate last year under the opposition Puwersa ng Masang Pilipino, of which he is still the chairman, had to still calls himself "independent."

Enrile said he cleared his switch to the majority with current President Joseph Estrada, president of the PMP.

Gordon said "in effect, party-switching has contributed to the weakening of the political institution of the Philippine electorate and encouraged transactional leadership instead of transformational leadership."

Gordon said also, this practice had encouraged a permanently-based politics and limited the relevance of party platforms in the election of government officials, and the unscrupulous persons, who can manipulate the system to serve their interests.

Programs not continued

"This undermines system has resulted in the non-continuity of government plans, programs and projects, which eventually redounds to the disadvantages for the Filipino people," he said.

In his proposed legislation, Gordon defined a political "turncoat as any members of the political party who would change party affiliation any time after being included in the party's ticket.

A political party might consist or a member who regularly voted with another political party as a political opposition, he added.

The classification, however, did not apply to any member who would oblige to change the party direction "by reason of his or her religious, ideological, or moral training or belief," according to the senator.

Gordon proposed a host of

GORDON

sought penalties for turncoats, like he should be prohibited from running either if he would change party affiliation during the election period, or he should forfeit his office if he would change affiliation while serving his term.

The other proposed penalties for a turncoat were:

✦ Disqualification from running for an election position in the next election immediately following the act of changing party affiliation.

✦ Disqualification from being appointed to or from holding any position in any public office for three years after the expiration of his or her term.

✦ Disqualification from running any executive or administrative position in his or her new political party.

✦ Requirement to refund amounts received from his or her former political party, plus a surcharge of 25 percent.

An opportunist, on the other hand, shall not be entitled to any of the benefits given to party members and may be expelled by the party he may run for, required to refund all amounts received from the party, according to Gordon.

Gordon did not say if a counterpart version of turncoatism prompted him to author and file such a bill.

Like anti-dynasty bill

But he stated, the belief that penalizing turncoatism "would strengthen party solidarity" in the political system. "Turncoat is 'untold' country that membership in political parties will be relatively permanent, and the electorate can expect, if not exact, strict compliance from government officials in terms of promises and platforms upon which their political party is grounded."

If passed, the Commission on Elections will draft and enforce the implementing rules. But first, the bill, which is expected to meet stiff opposition like the unpopular anti-dynasty bill, has to get the nod of senators and congressmen alike.

REWARD MONEY
Brig. Gen. Francisco Cubillan, Southern Command deputy chief, hands over envelope containing P150,000 to "Your Agent 7" in Zamboanga City Friday. The informant's tip led to the arrest of running Abu Sayyaf member Michael Pujit.

Magsaysay winners here for awards

By Nikko Dizon

FOUR winners of the Ramon Magsaysay Awards arrived yesterday in Manila for the awarding ceremonies to be held on the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) next week.

Mr. Hye Rae Yoon (Emergent Leadership), Ms. Yeow Meichiki (Public Service), Mr. Mahtow Suhrawi Universiteit, Literature, and Creative Communication Arts), and Dr. V. Sharoba (Public Service) were welcomed by the officials at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Terminals 1 and 2.

Mr. Somhath Soraphone (Government Leadership) was unavailable to arrive from Thailand last night, while Rev. Jon Hogghaka, to Government Service) is scheduled to arrive today.

The awardees were met by Mrs. Carmencita Abella, president of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF), and Lourdes Mercado-Subia, communications officer.

For the second year in a row, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo would not be able to attend the awarding ceremonies at the Magsaysay Awards.

Abella said Malacañang did not say why Mr. Arroyo is not attending the event.

Abella said Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide, Jr. has been invited by the RMAF to be a guest at the awarding ceremonies to be held on Aug. 31.

Abella recalled that Ms. Arroyo was abroad when the RMAF awarding ceremonies were held last year.

The RMAF's board of trustees is chaired by former Finance Secretary Jose Isidro, one of the dissident El Cabaret members who resigned and rallied for Ms. Arroyo's own resignation last month, amid allegations of electoral fraud and corruption against her and her husband, retired air, and brother-in-law.

Also, the RMAF board member is Ricky Carandang who has also resigned from the Arroyo administration.

The awardees expressed gratitude for the award, with Yoon and Dr. Sharoba saying that the recognition given them would hopefully generate more support for their advocacies.

"It's a moment of great joy because it suddenly gave us international recognition and appreciation which I think is very much needed and we are hoping that this international recognition will open up more people in our country for greater support to what we are doing," Sharoba, a 74-year-old medical doctor, who is at the forefront of fighting cancer in India.

She helped found the Cancer Institute in 1954, that has grown from a 12-bed hospital with two rooms to a 430-bed hospital and research center.

Yoon, who came with her husband and 12-year-old son, said that the award recognizes not only her work but also those done by her counterparts doing the same work in the provinces of Korea.

Through an interpreter, Yoon said that the recognition has encouraged her and her fellow workers in "palpuos", the farmers term for grassroots, community-based social work, to work harder to help develop a healthy democratic society in Korea.

Manila Hotel buys Fraport's stake in Piatco for $200M

THE MANILA Hotel Corp., owned by publishing tycoon Emilio Yap, has bought the stake of Fraport in the Philippine International Air Terminal Co. Inc. (Piatco) consortium, the operator of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Terminal 3, for $200 million.

In FraportAG, the Naia airport operator, Fraport confirmed that it has accepted the offer of the Manila Hotel, ending a dispute which has dragged on for years.

In a statement, Fraport said it would receive an initial sum of $68 million once it closes the deal. The deal is expected by the end-August $130 million within six months of signing.

Fraport does not plan to pursue further compensation following the sale of its stake to the Manila Hotel, a source familiar with the matter told Reuters.

Fraport had sought World Bank arbitration to settle a dispute over compensation after it was ousted by the Philippine government last December. Manila had rejected Fraport's request for $445 million in compensation.

The sale still needs to be approved by Fraport's supervisory board. Reuters

Opposition hits Palace for peddling cheap tales

OPPOSITION leader Rosario Morales yesterday scored the Arroyo administration for using "self-declared truths expert" Jonathan Tiongco "to weave cheap tales against the opposition and non-friendly writers in media."

Mrs. Ita (Tiongco) failed anyone to demolish the authenticity of the "Hello, Garci" tapes, he is now trying to destroy the opposition and media members within its ranks," said Morales, secretary general of Pwersa ng Masa.

Tiongco, together with Environment Secretary Mike Defensor, earlier said that the tapes containing the conversation between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano were spliced.

After that, Tiongco alleged that opposition presidential bet Fernando Poe Jr. died of poisoning and that former senator Gregorio Honasan can sway with P40 million intended for PE's campaign. He also said that Morales asked him in late 2004 to bomb Ms Arroyo's plane heading to Cebu City.

Morales said Tiongco's claims showed that he is also "no expert political operator and a con-man. The administration could have found a scene in him for being a multitalented person."

International school auction alarms foreign businessmen

By Jovanne Aming

THE FOREIGN Chambers of the Philippines (FCP) yesterday expressed "extreme concern" over the impending auction of the foreign-owned school Manila (ISM).

The Makati-based ISM, the oldest and largest of the international schools operating in the country, is unable to pay its former and current Filipino teachers about P7.1 million in back wages as ordered by the Supreme Court.

"Clearing the cutback could make it more difficult for local families... to remain in the Philippines or to move to Manila in the future," FCP said in a statement.

"[ISM's] closure would result in breakup of one of our member firms maintaining their business units for the Philippines," it added.

Signatories to the statement included the presidents of the American, Australian-New Zealand, Canadian, European, Japanese and Korean chambers of commerce, namely Jim Barnes, Richard Harding Stewart (Sid), William Bailey, Hirohichi Kamegaichi and Jose Cuisia.

Shameem Qureshi, president of Philippine Association of Multinational Companies, also signed.

Many executives who belong to the group, which has over 2,000 member firms, have children attending ISM. Many children of diplomatic and trade missions post Bank families also study in the school.

On July 18, the Department of Labor and Employment issued a writ of execution implementing the Supreme Court order of June 2000. As a result, ISM's bank accounts were frozen while the BIR's deficiency assessment on Aug. 11 for sale of ISM's real properties on Sept. 5.

DOLE's action to force the sale of ISM resulted in "deep concentration" among the 1,700 students at the school, their parents and the international business and diplomatic communities, FCP noted.

The dispute concerned demands for equal pay and claims for back pay and back benefits differential between 1995 and 2000 by a group of 267 Filipino members of the ISM teachers' union, majority of whom had already retired. They had collectively asked for P102 in some if there an average of $42,500 each.

Pointing out that the school was started by the parents of the students, FCP hailed the ISM's compliance with the high tribunal's order when the school increased the salaries of the faculty. Most teachers' claims' date the decision applied to future salaries and past compensation.

The group also pointed out that ISM was non-stock and non-profit and dedicated all its revenues to the education of its students.

FCP urged the government's executive and judicial branches to find a solution to the long-standing dispute.

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The WORLD

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Asian money hubs seen likely targets of al-Qaida

SINGAPORE—Asian financial capitals have taken extensive measures to guard themselves against a terrorist attack but regional officials and experts fear a strike on a major city could just be a matter of time.

The Financial Times newspaper, quoting French undercover operator Jean-Louis Brugui?re, reported Friday that cities like Tokyo, Singapore or Sydney could be hit by al-Qaida to exploit what investors confidence in the region.

But Asian governments have long been aware of the danger.

ID talks in particular have been on guard since the al-Qaida attacks on New York and Washington in September 2001, which were followed by bombings in Indonesia and the Philippines blamed on the Jemaah Islamiyah group.

Subsequent bombings in Madrid and London have heightened fears that oceans metropolitan centers in Asia could be next.

In Singapore, armed police now patrol the MRT train system and entertainment districts frequented by foreigners. Guards from the high-security Gurkha forces armed with assault rifles and surveillance are posted key foreign embassies.

Tokyo, which has the world's biggest public transport network, stepped up security after the July 7 bombings in London.

Sydney also placed extra police and security guards on its public transport systems, and the city has a more evacuation plan involving the private sector.

In the wake of the London bombings, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong extended a curfew zone during the city-state's weekend 40th independence day celebrations to earlier this month.

"We must be psychologically prepared for this, so that if they even strike the laws we will be mentally and understandably, refusing to be cowed by the terrorists and moving our metropolitan," he said in a televised address.

Singapore, frequently visited by American warships and aircraft, will host the International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings in September 2006 including 16,000 participants.

The Financial Times quoted French investigating magistrate Brugui?re, who has been tracking terrorists since the 1990s, as saying that many Asian countries were less prepared than Britain or the United States for an attack.

In Hong Kong, a police spokesperson said the territory, which will host the World Trade Organization Summit in December, was under a "moderate" level of alert, the second highest.

"The chances that Hong Kong gets attacked are very low. But we keep ourselves prepared, alert and vigilant," chief superintendent Alfred Ho of the public relations branch told AFP.

Ho said Hong Kong police undertake "regular exercises to cover different scenarios" and keep in touch with overseas counterparts.

Clive Williams, director of terrorism studies at the Australian National University, said he suspected al-Qaida to target people rather than infrastructure in an attempt to alter government policy in a big.

"If it were an attack in Tokyo or Japan or Australia or Singapore it's more likely to be a public transport target," he told AFP.

Akhi Bergo, from the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, doubted whether al-Qaida would have the capability to attack targets in Asia.

"If they are operationally targeting financial institutions, watch the rate of kid decrease in killing people from wrecking evacuations, that's a change of direction," he said.

Japan said Friday it already has tight security in place.

"I can't clear how concrete this report is," said Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe's Hiroshi, the spokesperson for the Japanese government. AFP

NIGER CRISIS
Another mother malnourished child waits at a Medecins Sans Frontieres center in Dogo, near Zinder in hunger-stricken Niger. UN chief Kofi Annan is in the impoverished west African country to draw attention to the millions people facing food shortages.

WORLDBRIEFS

Africa ministers declare TB emergency

MAPUTO—African health ministers have declared a tuberculosis emergency to mobilize greater political commitment in the fight against one of the continent's big killers, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Friday. "The World Health Organization Regional Committee for Africa, comprising health ministers from 46 member states, has declared tuberculosis an emergency in the African region," WHO said after four days of talks in Mozambique. "The declaration is a response to an epidemic that has quadrupled the annual number of new TB cases in 18 African countries since 1990 and continues to claim more lives on this continent, killing more than half a million people every year," it said. Tuberculosis is a leading cause of death among people who are HIV-positive, accounting for about 11 percent of AIDS deaths worldwide. It poses a major challenge to managing treatment for people with HIV, WHO experts say. Declaration of national emergency should unlock more money from the fo?ur of Eight (G8) industrialized nations, the United States, and the World Fund to other developing countries to free much of their cash for fighting AIDS and other diseases, the WHO says. Reuters

S. Lanka to hold 2005 presidential poll

COLOMBO—Sri Lanka's Supreme Court on Friday cited a presidential election date in late 2005 in a victory for the political heir of outgoing President Chandrika Kumaratunga who was barred from a fifth term in office by a constitutional ban. Kumaratunga, who won 1994 election, 1999, 2000 and 2001 elections, was ruled in 1999, and her opponents argued that meant she had been in two and more subsequent terms this year. She cannot run again, and another political scandal is over the issue into the country. "According to the constitution, and the interpretation we have made ... I hold that President's second term in office commenced on Dec. 22, 1999 and will end on one a from that date," Chief Justice Sarath. N. Silva said. Reuters

Americans back right to protest

WASHINGTON—An overwhelming majority of Americans say critics of the Iraq war should be free to voice their objections — a rare example of widespread agreement about a conflict that has divided the nation along partisan lines. Nearly three weeks after a grieving California mother named Cindy Sheehan started her anti-war protest near President George W. Bush's Texas ranch, nine of 10 people surveyed in an AP-Ipsos poll say it is OK for anti-war protesters to publicly share their concerns about the conflict. "We have the right to disagree with the government," said Mike Ralston, a salesman from Florida. Within the US death tollfor Iraq climbing past 1,970 with no particularly bloody August, the president's opinion of the Bush administration's handling of the war has been trending north the past few years. AP

17 immigrants die in Paris fire

PARIS—Seventeen people including six children died and 30 were injured early Friday when fire razed through a dilapidated apartment building in Paris' poor west-ern African immigrant families, the fire ravaged and closed the blaze — over other stories west over Paris — warning in the rubbish of the building on the 13th district in the southeast of the French capital. The cause of the fire was not known, but a criminal investigation was under way, in turns-forced 50 rescued at 6 a.m., 5 said at least 17 died in the inferno. Six of the dead were children, one of them a baby. Of the injured, 23 were hospitalized, two in serious condition. The blaze followed a fire on April 19 on the central Opera district in which 25 people, also immigrants, perished in a hotel. AFP

CIA top men faulted for pre-9/11 lapses

WASHINGTON—The CIA inspector general has recommended disciplinary reviews for current and former officials who were involved in failed intelligence efforts before the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, The Associated Press has learned.

CIA Director Porter Goss now must decide whether the disciplinary proceedings should go forward.

The proceedings, formally called an accountability board, were recommended by the CIA inspector general, John Helgerson, the AP learned late Thursday. It remains unclear which people are identified for the accountability boards in the highly classified report spanning hundreds of pages.

The report was delivered to Congress on Tuesday night.

Following a two-year review into what went wrong before the suicide hijackings, Helgerson harshly criticizes a number of the agency's most senior officials, according to people familiar with the report. Among those singled out for criticism are former CIA Director George Tenet, former clandestine service chief Jim Pavitt and former counterterrorism executive Cofer Black.

The former officials are likely candidates for proceedings before an accountability board, which could take a number of actions, including letters of reprimand or dismissal. The proceedings also could clear the former officials of wrongdoing.

Those who discussed the report with the AP all spoke on condition of anonymity because it remains highly classified and has been distributed only to a small circle in Washington.

TENET

Tenet and Pavitt declined to comment. Black could not be reached Thursday.

Goss was among those who requested the inspector general's review as part of a 2002 congressional inquiry into the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on New York City and Washington that killed nearly 3,000 people.

At the time, Goss, a Florida Republican, chaired the House Intelligence Committee. A CIA officer himself in the 1960s, Goss now must decide whether the current and former agency personnel should be considered for sanctions.

Those who know Goss well question whether the director, who took over the agency last September, will accept all of the disciplinary reviews.

Despite public vocales for accountability many in the intelligence community believe Goss would be loath to try to discipline popular former senior officials and cause unrest within the agency.

He may not want to go after less senior people still in the CIA's employ. Intelligence veterans say these CIA employees are the government's most highly trained in counterterrorism and before the Sept. 11 attacks, devoted their time to trying to stop al-Qaida terrorists. The hearings would force them to defend their careers rather than working against terrorist groups.

In addition, the controversy investigations after Sept. 11 determined that an intelligence overhaul was essential to attack Muslim extremists.

Some members of Congress, including California Rep. Jane Harman, the Intelligence Committee's senior Democrat, are pushing for the CIA to produce a declassified version of the report so the public can debate these and other issues. Some family members of 9/11 victims have also called for the report's immediate release. AP

ISSN 0116-2442 INQUIRER Est. 1976: 200 OPINION

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Substandard textbooks

EDITORIAL

AN APPALLING indicator of the poor state of basic education in the Philippines is the finding by the Department of Education that around 130 textbooks in English language instruction and the social sciences proposed by publishers for use in public schools are full of grammatical errors. In a meeting with the publishers, Education Undersecretary Juan Miguel Luz did not mince words in berating the publishers.

"If you want to sell to public schools, comply with our requirements and competencies," he said. "Quality begets better quality, and it's not right to buy quality."

In order to tighten the rules on textbook evaluations, every manuscript would have to satisfy four levels of evaluation, according to Luz: coverage of learning competencies; accuracy of content; presentation, vocabulary, language and visuals; and grammar. We don't know if the levels are in a descending or ascending order. If it's the latter, the finding seems to indicate that while the textbooks may have passed the requirements of content, accuracy and presentation, they have failed the last test, grammar. But, of course, we know that many textbooks fail in basic grammar and become even more problematic in content and context.

Indeed, quality begets quality. The worrisome question is, how long has the nation of erroneous textbooks been obtaining? How could publishers be so brazen as to submit for the department's evaluation and approval 130 textbooks filled with glaring errors in grammar and content?

The answer is that the publishers have been led to believe they could get away with murder because of the Depkil's historic complicity with publishers of substandard textbooks. This is an age-old complicity running for generations. Luz might have insisted that the Depkil has the right to buy quality, but historically it has not been doing that. It has instead bought theft. No wonder, publishers have become so brazen. Shamelessness begets shamelessness.

The situation has obtained even when concerned parents and teachers have been protesting the erroneous textbooks. Since 2001, Ateneo Colegio Sa el Murian School in Quezon City has been pointing out to the Depkil the errors of the history book, "Ayos, Siasin, Pigsisin at sa Himagsikang," published by SD Publishing, an imprint of Vibal Publishing, perhaps the country's largest textbook publisher. But obviously unapparented by the lack of response from the department, which even approved the textbook for continued use in public schools, he had to place an ad in the paper last September to publicize the errors.

Since then, more and more textbooks have been exposed to be erroneous and even immoral. A textbook on Filipino grammar, for example, has been found to have several readings on economics and politics that basically exalt Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada and gloss over their corruption and plunder.

It should be remembered that even before, in 1999, during the administration of Joseph Estrada, the Depkil had been rocked by controversies involving textbook procurement. The department had apparently become cozy with textbook publishers so that the evaluation of textbooks submitted to it for use in public schools became largely an affair of back-slapping and camaraderie, not objectivity and scholarly rigor.

All of the efforts of Luz and the department are an attempt to restore the image of the education establishment. However belated, the efforts must be commended. They deserve public support.

In the meantime, perhaps the public needs to hear from the National Book Development Board on the progress of its textbook review committee, which is supposed to monitor complaints on errors in textbooks used in private schools. The NBDB accepts complaints, which would have to expose at least 10 types of "facts, concepts, grammar and computations" in a textbook. The committee then evaluates the book based on its "grammatical correctness and clarity of the text, accuracy of facts, information and concepts, relevance of ideas, and other criteria specific to the learning area." If the errors are proven, the registration of the publisher will be cancelled. He will also be fined P100,000.

We have yet to see if the new set-up works. But it sends the message that publishers must invest in enriching research, competent writers, scholars and editors, and extensive presentations in order to improve the quality of textbooks. Books cheapen the minds of our young people. Inaccurate and poorly written books do not reinforce literacy; they abet ignorance and mediocrity. They deserve to be burned.

Supreme Court loquacity

SEPARATE OPINION

Sabiniano A. Cruz

WITH THE RETIRED interim of the public in impeachment who rose of President Macapagal-Arroyo's term back to Francisco vs. Nagmamaneho na mga Manunuggod ng mga Mangingisong Pilipino Inc., reported from Page 44 to Page 344 and covering almost one-half of Volume 415 of the Supreme Court Reports decisions).

This case dealt with the question of when to extraordinary remedies should be denied. Instead of the proper application of the one-sentence rule that "no impeachment proceeding shall be initiated against the same official more than once within a period of one year."

The question was debated by more than 200 petitioners, government officials, intervenors, and amici curiae individually listed on seven pages of the SCRA before the 14 justices of the Supreme Court who eventually decided the case. The Chief Justice did not participate.

The decision of the majority penned by Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago held that in "the instances when prior by the filing of the impeachment complaint and referred to the House Committee on Justice ... the meaning of Section 2(5) of Article XI becomes clear. Once an impeachment complaint has been initiated in the House of Representatives, another one may be filed against the same official within a one-year period. ...

"In fine, considering that the first impeachment complaint was filed by former Senator Ernesto Ermita against Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide, Jr., the first seven members of the House of Rep. Gonz, on August 2, 2003 and referred to the House Committee on Justice on August 5, 2003, the second impeachment complaint filed by Representatives Gilberto C. Teodoro Jr., and Rafael Mariano (Teodoro/Mariano) on (Sept. Justice Davide, Jr.) on June 2, 2005 violates the constitutional prohibition against the initiation of impeachment proceedings against the same impeachable official within a one-year period."

This interpretation was reached by the 54-page ponencia after denunciation of collateral issues like separation of powers, judicial review, basic moral distinguished from pure to moral, justiciability and other topics already established in previous cases. The latter two they did not have to be repeated as fought in the decision unless the purpose was to demonstrate the efficiency of Justice Carpio-Morales' research staff.

And to follow the leader, or not be a dissenter, some their own patriotic gifts, six justices voted some to the same conclusion as the ponencia, filed their own concurring opinions to further support the decision and add to the confusion. This was done by Justices Jose Bellosillo in 6 pages; Romulo Puno in 38 pages; Antonio Panganiban in 14 pages; Leonardo-Vicente Quisumbing in 8 pages; Ruben T. Reyes in 11 pages; and Justice D. Tinga in 18 pages.

They filled all of 200 pages of the SCRA.

Did they think that the presence was needed to be supplemented with their own wisdom? Or were they simply bored for doing nothing because they had decided all the cases tackled en banc and they had no more work to do except enrich Philippine jurisprudence?

Those who voted to grant the petitions and in effect dismissed them by majority vote were Justices Jose Puno, Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez, Ynares-Cuevas and Adolfo Azcuna. Justices Puno and Ynares-Santiago penned dissenting official written a one-sentence.

Those who voted to dismiss the petitions were Justices Artemio V. Panganiban, Reynato S. Puno, Leonardo A. Quisumbing, Antonio T. Carpio, Consuelo Ynares-Santiago and Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez.

Justice Panganiban in his concurring opinion said: "Let us not be misled by the claim that the issue is political and therefore beyond the reach of judicial review. Nothing could be more political than the impeachment process itself. Yet, the Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Puno in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Antonio T. Carpio in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago in her concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

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Justice Adolfo S. Azcuna in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Dante O. Tinga in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Minita V. Chico-Nazario in her concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Cancio C. Garcia in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Romeo J. Callejo Sr. in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Conchita Carpio Morales in her concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Renato C. Corona in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Arturo D. Brion in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Diosdado M. Peralta in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Lucas P. Bersamin in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Mariano C. del Castillo in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Jose Portugal Perez in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Jose C. Mendoza in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Bienvenido L. Reyes in his concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Justice Maria Lourdes P. A. Sereno in her concurring opinion said: "The Constitution has entrusted the judiciary with the power to review impeachment cases."

Frustrations

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

THE economy is in many ways a cause of the uncertainty across sectors and opinions that I have heard in the past few days. I'm not saying that I began to sound like a crying maiden. I try not to be, but the frustrations levels are close to maximum. Use the term—losses not necessarily in the order of importance.

There's the news about the finance department announcement that the government has abandoned its goal of raising P1.5 billion in additional revenues from "tax raise" this year. The DOF bureaucrat quoted was quick to assure, however, that even in a worst-case scenario, the government would still be able to keep to its deficit targets.

Excuse me. In the first place, there were was a ghost of a chance, from the very beginning, that the additional P1.5 billion could have been collected. That measure was another non-starter, and the legislators who crafted that VAT exclusion list a no-cut-colors bill have a. They adopted it only because they wanted to send that item hitting passed a week and Tax-influenced bill, counting on the short memories of the public, who would have forgotten all the politicking that took place when the revenue shortfall became obvious.

I, too, have a short memory in that I had forgotten why that P1.5 billion was an overestimate. Then I called up fiscal expert Victor Limcaoco, and the kindly supplied me the following reminders.

Sen. Ralph Recto, who authored the Senate bill, did what I say only tell revenues shopping to come up with that P15 billion. He used the estimates of the National Tax Research Center (NTRC) of total estimated incremental revenues for 2005 of P38.4 billion (P5.3 from cigarettes, P5.1 from beer and spirits). And by the way, independent estimates of the additional revenues from cigarettes are P3.5 billion less than the NTRC estimate. So that added P6 billion or additional revenues coming from removing the duty-free status of duty-free cigarettes. The estimate he got from the DOF, but it was for a five-year period. He forgot—or ignored—the time frame.

Recto also ignored the warning of the DOF technical staff that revenues may fall during the first year of the tax due to over-loading, where cigarette manufacturers, in anticipation of new revenue, increase their production and withdrawals to take advantage of the old tax rates.

Let me emphasize: There wasn't a ghost of a chance that an additional P15 billion could have been collected, even had the duty-free impasses not gotten a temporary restraining order from an Olongapo judge to suspend collection of taxes on their imported cigarettes. But to blame the government for the P15 billion target would have been one if the cigarette manufacturers had not been granted and if the issuance of duty-free cigarettes had proceeded as planned.

Frankly, discussing it when, in the same breath, the government seems to promise to do that even in the "much-cite" revenue-shortfall scenario, the deficit target will still be met. That is not reassuring. Further, it should strike fear in their hearts. Because the only way the deficit target will be met is if revenues are not as large as reported is for expenditures to be reduced. And this expenditure-squeezing exercise is going to hit education, health, infrastructure—which means the long-term development of the country's development prospects.

Related to this, and adding insult to injury, there are the news stories and interviews where legislators talk-ask about the 2006 budget and some of issues entitled also to be heard.

I do not see why the decrease and the supercommittee suggestions lead to any major areas of the issue and omissions of the individual powers unless they title they had to be heard for the information—or administrative—or executive—of the public. Let me not say that the public was not impressed.

If I might modestly make a suggestion, perhaps they should amend more to be in many cases, as still pending in the dockets of the Supreme Court instead of needlessly cluttering their evidence. Anyway, are many people, including members of the bar, must have instituted of total time consumption. Because there were very simply personal opinions that did not have the ruling elements of the opinion. They were simply ruling on the rules, and not necessarily palatable.

There were several separate opinions I liked when I was a member of the Supreme Court, but usually in dissents where the majority does not, because I felt the other side should be heard. I did write a long concurring opinion in one case but that was to further push religious freedom, and it was one of very few exceptions. Where I simply concurred without adding to the ponente, I recommended the writers by giving him the line used.

I was the ponente of the case of Association of Small Landowners vs. Secretary of Agrarian Reform, 175 SCRA 343, which sustained the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law. It involved four petitions. Although each one was considered grounds. The 40 page decision discussed many real topics like the police power, expropriation and just compensation, due process, equal protection, the limit for the landless people, and the purposes for the consequences of the agrarian reform. I wrote a concurring opinion of 19 subheadings—and there was no opinion concurring opinion either.

Opposition shifts tactics

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE OPPOSITION in the House, which is behind the impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo, has apparently shifted tactics. Instead of weeks, the leaders, from the moderates to the militants, as well as Marxist elements, had talked high profile in the inflow of dissent and the filing of petitions in order to fix the floor proceedings. But the opposition must have realized that coming a lot of the "red flag" advocates as well as those identified with Marxist ties scaring away the middle class on the basis of Representative Teresa Oyonque, Teodoro Casiño and Crispin Beltran as well as Bayan followers in the debates. The debating club, largely as young "converts" to the cause of the broader opposition members like Representatives Peter Inabio and Antonio Tinio have also toned down.

Another reasonable change is the opposition's declaration that it would support Vice President Noli de Castro as successor to GMA. Instead there is a sequence to front from the middle and upper classes about possible chaos in a post-GMA scenario, owing to the different agenda of various opposition groups.

* * *

There is since big propaganda effort to get, say, those representatives whom the opposition has not reached or interesting to their side, to sign the impeachment complaint. Kabataan Partylist lawmaker Mong Palatino, for example, clarified on the issue that the opposition has been reaching out to Representative Imee Marcos, Ilocos Sur lawmaker Eric Singson, Speaker Jose de Venecia and Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri, who earlier said that Sen. Panfilo Lacson and fighting to get this consistency report on Lacson out. But Barbers would never have made it against the Cortes or even Lorenzo Legaspi.

There's also talk that Ace Barbers, who is carving his third term, stunned the party of the youth leaders, which went instead to second-termer Pampanga Regalado. Speaker Jose de Venecia tried to appease him by placing him (the phone part of chair of the powerful accounts committee), but this didn't appease much.

* * *

In a recent chat, a member of the House majority coalition told me the opposition would lift angry sooner than anyone thinks because of its troubles' disparate goals and agenda. The second element, he said, is glued together only by the overpowering desire to oust GMA, by fanatics to expand the programs of Nelia Sey, Bonifacio Agapito II, and Senators Freddie Aguilar, is ironically now forced to sleep in the same political bed as the statesmen left. He recalled that not too long ago, leftist elements had incited guerrilla attacks on Aguilar's home and resulted in violence and led to Lacson's abandonment and the death of hundreds of workers, many of them long-time workers of the Company's regime family. The Aguilar's regime, he said, was also behind Imee Marcos, now hosted enemy to John T. Pelly politics under George Bush Sr.

* * *

A TV anchorwoman recently stood some newspaper ads carrying the signatures of "over 600 top leaders in sectors of civil society" who expressed support for GMA "as a all the best options to choose." The anchorwoman asked a prominent civil society leader from Makati what he thought of the full-page ads, and the latter replied that it was exactly the same three names that used to say and that "if we wanted those same three names, we would have signed them." Not only that, there was one surprising—anyone among the prominent leaders in the ad could have shouldered the statements. What is more surprising is that even those leaders had signified support for GMA (including the stars) from her alma mater, Assumption. Comment: by signing the manifestos, many of those leaders were also lending their signatures. Those ads spoke volumes about the support level's continues to erupt to fill society, despite other pundits that Angara tortured the "carpet-bombing" of GMA in the media. This Publisher-Statesman has nuances in mind.

* * *

The sincerely passing of retired Army Gen. Rene Saguisag—brother of retired Rep. Gen. Rene Saguisag, Sanggi (Sen.) and his wife Susan—was remarkable for the outpouring of support by people from the whole political spectrum, from left to center to right. This was evident in the tears when I learned that among the mourners were people who had been in the opposite camp of Macapagal-Arroyo, who called up Susan's Jaguar on the same afternoon the news about Rene's death came out. Rene Saguisag was governed by the various groups as honest and unbought, as he was also a friend of journalists and journalists, always seeking the humanness of the country.

The gatherings of the Silay State Society of the Philippines will never be the same again without Rene. The products of their State days of 1969 were responsible for historic matter of importance and he was trainer and seminarians were well represented in his left his audience in earlier and Silay's people [illegible].

* * *

In his both in state, their three children and his parents, was profound condolences over the passing of such a fine young man.

A Fil-Am woman in the White House

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

MY sons have asked that President George Bush should be congratulated for appointing the first woman executive chef in the White House.

Finally, a woman in the White House kitchen! What progress!" I was chortled, to the audience of grilled cheese.

This is designate the accomplishment of Cristeta Pasos Comerford, the Fil-American chef who has parlayed her way from degree in Manila to the executive mansion. As Eddie Gil reported in the Inquirer, Comerford has been in charge of planning the menus and preparing the meals of the leaders and their guests, perhaps the most important personages in the world. Comerford has been in the kitchen since the Clinton era and the world should rejoice with me. As Benita Ortiz columnist Ellen Goodman put it: "Comerford's promotion finally didn't follow the usual script. It's not every day that a woman in the executive Cook, but he did get her start in the White House kitchen during the Clinton years. Who knows better who and their wasn't progress?"

At least, Malacañang didn't try to put a brave face on the fact that the appointment by opposite sense, although it did try to milk the news for all its propaganda value, including how Comerford's accomplishment brings pride to all Filipinos. But the fact remains that the White House kitchen is one of the last, rock-solid bastions of male chauvinism, where real men cook and their wives don't have to. Who does kitchens, who and their wasn't progress?

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AS FOR

ONE of the dwindling number of doctors still serving their countrymen

Good governance will make doctors stay in the Philippines

IN THE NEXT few years, the Philippines will be "doctorless." Who are doctors leaving the country?

Doctors who are employed in government hospitals or in municipal health offices earn a gross monthly income ranging from P8,500 to P23,500 only. Their work in government health institutions that are ill-equipped, if not lacking in facilities. Most of the time, too, supplies are not enough. These conditions make diagnosis and treatment of patients difficult.

Meanwhile, the salaries of a nurse abroad ranges from $2,000 to $4,000 a month. And workload and work-related risks are less because a nurse has less responsibilities.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has failed to address the needs of health professionals. Their visions for a more favorable working environment has been ignored. The national health budget continues to be reduced, depriving deserving government hospitals in Metro Manila and the provinces of much-needed facilities and supplies.

Instead, Mr. Arroyo has promised labor majors an assistance to the economic problems of the country. She has focused her energies to hold on to her position. Corruption taints continue to hound her administration. Corruption is certainly the toughest disease that has infected this land and we do not yet see the heart of it.

Doctors find that growth and development are difficult to attain in a government during because of corruption. Doctors have become duty bind practicing their profession difficult under such circumstances, in addition to their problems of low pay and difficult working conditions.

The Arroyo administration has to shape up or ship out. Shaping up would encourage doctors and nurses to stay and serve our countrymen.

The Filipino long to regain once the easy release of stock, integrity restored, peace and hope. These are principles that nobility law and define our aspirations. A change in the national leadership is necessary in order for us to move forward with dignity.

—ELIZABETH A. JOSE, M.D., FPS-A Filaca St. West Triangle, Quezon City

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Bgy. and Maxcardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to this 897-4592, 897-4793, or e-mail reader@inquirer.com.ph

All letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

LETTERS

Meralco's marketing arm

POWER consumers lauded the resolution of the Energy Regulatory Commission to hold the "Town Hall" last July 20, 2005. This is what true dogma of Section 4 Republic of Electricity Consumers for Reforms has been suggesting to the ERC—to give the consumers a forum where they could deal with each other their observations on how the ERC, as a regulator, handles the petitions filed by the utilities, and how the guidelines, guidelines and rules as mandated by the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira).

In the initial head input of the Meralco petition for a rate increase last July 26, Bagon vehemently objected to the ERC plan of letting Meralco to the "Consumer Town" for pointed out that there is why a consumer forum, that it should have only consumer participation. He added that Meralco could have its separate consumer forum if it wished so.

We were surprised, therefore, to see in the premises of a huge number of Meralco officers and staff—a show of force, indeed—in the July 20 "Consumer Hour."

Many homeowners' associations in Metro Manila could have been empowered to take sides but the ERC sent out invitations in advance, apparently the five volunteer forum visited are to be a threats forum, haphazardly organized by the ERC to discuss its own rate application. Such a move was not like previous. The Senate Blue presentation made by Meralco, notwithstanding Bagon's previous objections, gave us the impression that the ERC has become a marketing arm of Meralco. We hope we are wrong.

The consumers welcome this so-called "Consumer Hour" and we hope that this be done on a regular basis. However, we request the ERC to hold the subsequent fora strictly for residential consumers. We also expect the ERC to send out invites of invitation to the president of each homeowners' association in Metro Manila.

—NELLY E. ERMITO, Subdivision of Homeowners Association in Barangay Don Bosco, Parañaque City

A lesson on giving credit where it is due

AS BEHALF of the Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal Foundation (CCMF), let me congratulate the Inquirer for your powerful editorial on "With behind bars" (PDI, 8/22/05), which brought to focus the plight of minors in prisons and the failures of the Philippine justice system, and how governments seems to exist only when the interest media shines on them.

The editorial cited filmmaker Brat Caroline's award winning film "Innan," a film that should have made us all spend money the money in our first place. We totally agree. But please allow me to clarify that the "Concerts" in the Consuelo Foundation that supported Caroline's opus is not the philanthropic Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal Foundation, but another group, one Consuelo Consuelo Zobel Ayala (www.consuelo.org).

The foundation that Chito Madrigal-Lebanio established is called Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal Foundation Inc. (CCMF) (www.chitomadrigal.org). CCMF is connected with the plight of minors in conflict with the law, but now concentrates in Rizal, Pagsan and Bulacan. It is currently undertaking programs to increase the ability of poor families to improve their lives, sustain their livelihood and enhance human dignity.

CCMF finds Caroline's efforts and the admirable support that our "home" Consuelo Foundation provided, but we cannot take credit for what it did not do.

Our best regards and highest esteem to the honest, Caroline and the Consuelo Foundation.

—ANITA KHALIL DOMALANTA, executive director, Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal Foundation Inc. (CCMF), www.chitomadrigal.org

Breastfeeding as political tool

LAST Aug. 5, President Macapagal-Arroyo launched Breastfeeding Month. However, Ms Arroyo did not breastfeed any of her babies against the opposition and to shield herself from the camera. women currently badgering her instead of speaking for infants—supposedly those belonging to two poor families who turned to her saved from death or malnutrition due to lactose-feeding.

The Association for the Rights of Children in Southeast Asia (ARCSEA), Action for Economic Reforms (AER), Philippine Oriental Hospital Publications Department, Opinion ng Manila, and the Manila Health Department, promises sustained support for the next six months, especially among five-star mothers. After all, babies have the right to be nourished with the best possible food—breastfeeding milk.

Ms Arroyo's breastfeeding advocacy is a very definite understanding. We have to contend with transnational milk companies that spend billions of pesos in promoting their products. There is an ongoing series of public hearings spearheaded by the Department of Health on the Milk Code in spite of these hearings, milk bottled and with pink ribbons of manufacturers are still displayed in full attendance, using sleek legalese in downplay the scientific evidence of breast milk's superiority to infant food.

Most disturbing is the fact that the activity spearheaded by the

PGH Department of Pediatrics on this same day, calling attention to breastfeeding. Twice famous mothers, gathered in various Philippinana costumes, and their babies), did not get media attention. Despite the fear of pissing off Malacañang, the Inquirer deserves Ayesh Bana, Asenal Bana, Anita Magsaysay-Ho, the Babaylan of Palma, Gloria De Tia, Celia Diaz-Laurel, Ginny Lanot, Phyllis Zubuldez, Soledad Reyes, Mariel Cabrera, Perfecto Sanchez, Janice Gaines Young and Madie Antiporda. Proceeds from the finished artworks will benefit PGH's breastfeeding program, which includes a plan to set up a lactation "milk bank" within the year.

With this recent show of apathy toward breastfeeding, Ms Arroyo cannot boast on her citizenship accounting—the welfare of infants and children, despite her recent media hits involving children and children's projects. She has dismissed so many times with her promises and lies and no amount of publicity can undo the deception. The Arroyo government is no longer in a position to champion the children cause because its programs are more on words and PR and less on actions.

—SOPHIA ALDEN PASCUAL, executive director, Association for the Rights of Children in Southeast Asia (ARCSEA), 999 1 San Pedro St., Singalong, Manila

Have we lost our sense of morality?

WHAT have we done to our country?

One can't help but feel sick with all the news about the Philippines that we're getting today. It seems as though the administration can get away (and with applause) on during the fraud with the packing of votes, kidnapping of witnesses, etc.

Salvagnans who came out against powerful and influential public officials either end up getting "rubbed" in a dubious manner or remaining their statements in envy.

Members of the House of Representatives proudly announce their decisions on the impeachment complaint even before they get to the hearings and presentation of evidence.

Law enforcement told hoaxes to confusion evidence that shows dwarfing by administration and Comelec officials in the 2004 elections.

Then we have a Church that chose to cozy to "pros and cleans" as if a thousands of evidence coupled with "suspicious" statements went beyond inclave and vision; a concern that swallows all the lies of government officials, both, lies and stinks; a supposedly intelligent and idealistic academes doing nothing in the face of serious crimes committed or still being committed by their students with educated public officials; and the also educated and relatively well-off middle class indifferent to the crime.

Meanwhile, the government is imposing additional taxes in a response to their increased and to the rise in the prices of oil, electricity, water, food and nearly-every-other basic commodity while salaries and wages remains the same.

What is the root cause of our apathy and indifference? Our reasons for survival? Or is it because we are in need of the shenanigans of our politicians? How how can we let us down, when we have done very little yet?

The answer is no. It simply means we have either lost our sensibility or our morality or both. Every day we are wrongdoings, lies are justified to hoodwink ourselves with them. When some people call for action against irregularities, we distance ourselves from them and brand them as deviants, cranks, subversives, even terrorists. Otherwise, we only watch the same sad personal everything as if the whole the source of economic and political disaster hangs over all our heads. In the end, we should ask ourselves, are we any better than the vile rogues and criminals we allow to get away with their crimes?

—ROMMEL FUNERAL, Barangay Batangka, Marilima City

Visayas governors, lead the way to federalism

WE MUST distance those of the Visayas governors to secede from the national government to form a Visayas Republic should not be dismissed as plain bravado. It is, to my mind, an expression, unintended it may be, of the sentiment of the Visayas federal-oriented local government which could have evoked more it not for the colonization of our islands by the Spaniards.

Before Spanish rule, the Filipinos had their own unit of local governments called barangay. Our country was composed of several independent and sometimes hostile groups. In the course of time, the barangays confederated for the mutual purpose of "mutual assistance and cooperation," each retaining governmental powers necessary to promote the general welfare and prosperity of their respective constituencies. The Confederation of Madaya-an of Panay under Datus Sumakwel is a case in point.

The Spaniards drank a hard blow to the two, move toward federalism. They established a centralized government which exercised all sovereign powers to the policy of centralization and subjugation. The political unfolding of the primitive genius of our forebears in governance was thus nipped in the bud.

Thus was how imperial Manila started, that its central authority sought to wrest home on local governments units and their constituents so that they became the colonial government today has chosen to perpetuate the corruption, abuses and excesses of the central government during Spanish regime.

When the Americans came, they retained the centralized government system instituted by the Spaniards even if they knew that their country was doing well under a federal system. After all, the Americans were also free from colonization who came later to subjugate us.

Thus, until today our nation suffers under the same kind of centralized government that oppressed our forebears.

A centralized government allows its chief executive to be omnipotent, where he or she is the sole decision maker, immune from any and supervision to criticism. Accomplished accomplices cannot thrive but out of power, so if he or she sometimes a clear betrayal of public trust, his or her act is simply called "lapse in judgment."

It is in the nature of a highly centralized government to reduce the people into mediocrities consuming servanthy of empire. It is their mission under the current to be always exposed upon—e.g., anti-coup, violation of rights and the harder to support a government that squanders their right to a better life.

Perhaps, it is now time to look back to our past, act in terms the evolutionary thrust toward a federal system, which our forebears gained. To paraphrase Thomas Jefferson, let's submit to the only salvation of the republic.

Visayan governors, lead the way!

—ELIZA TUBALLA, JR., solidarydaudio@yahoo.com

INQUIRER Visayas

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Making things happen sans politicking

By Hazel P. Villa
Jordan, Guimaras

PRESCHOOL children at Barangay Hoskyn's Day Care Center in Jordan, Guimaras get good teachers whose salaries are partly subsidized by the barangay council.

CHILDREN playing with sea cows amid dense sea grass coordinates doused with mangroves, clean streets and homes, child-friendly schools, "birth-spaced" families and no politicking.

This may sound like a portrait of pretty picture of your dream Philippine village but this is a reality in Barangay Jordan, Jordan town in the island province of Guimaras.

In fact, many local government units come over to check out what is so right about this coastal barangay of 1,520 people.

"The first thing we did was to establish a harmonious relationship among ourselves in the council as well as [observe] cooperation, discipline, sincerity and transparency in governance," said Hoskyn Barangay Captain Alfredo Dorotheo, 59.

The barangay has received numerous awards at the provincial level because of these practices, among them the "Alumar Barangay" in 2003, "most child-friendly" from 2002 to the present, "tourism friendly" in 2004 and "Kapitan Ako" that earned ng Barangay Kapitan Awards in 2002.

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Barangay Hoskyn was formerly called "Samar" but changed its name in honor of the English philanthropist Hoskyn Tyrwhitt who founded the village during World War II.

Records showed that Hoskyn helped the locals by giving them medicines, food and anything within his means. The people loved him so much they named the place after him.

Dorotheo said that every May 1, the Balsan Bulad (Holy Mountain) where the annual pagsalat is Guimaras Crucifixion in Guimaras) is held during Holy Week.

The fish catch started to decline from the 1990s to the 1998s due to the population explosion and the influx of fishermen who fished in the village during World War II.

Records showed that Hoskyn helped the locals by giving them medicines, food and anything within his means. The people loved him so much they named the place after him.

Dorotheo said that the people ignored family planning. There were many early marriages while young people were into premarital sex.

Aside from these, the children had issues with malnutrition and many households settle the village only had a few health facilities.

Kangin (shade and have farming) worked and from the village's watershed area of 38 hectares and the once plentiful sea grass started to disappear.

Intervention

The timely intervention of international organizations like the United Nations Children's Fund and the Save the Children Federation (SCF) as well as provincial and national assistance helped the decline of the village.

With the assistance of the SCF, one of the convert's forerunners in population, health and environment (PHE) programs, the residents embraced the People and Environment Co-existence Development Project (PEACE) in 2000.

The SCF through the Down-line project, strongly believes in integrated PEE approach as the key in meeting sustainable community development goals.

Phil's the Peace One, they identified their assets and problems using the Appreciative Community Mobilization (ACM) approach.

Through the guidance of SCF, the residents and their leaders "discovered" their strengths and challenges, "dreams" about their future, "designed" a plan to achieve that dream and "delivered" actions to realize their visions.

Dorotheo said they addressed their environmental problems first.

The upland residents planted 2,000 seedlings of acacia mangium in 2002 and jackfruit and mahogany trees in 2004. The fisherfolk planted 1,000 mangrove propagules in three hectares and 2,000 more in two hectares.

Family Planning sessions were also held in the six areas of the village where couples were taught the rights of their children, the importance of "birth-spacing," and their responsibilities as parents and models.

"The family planning sessions were really a challenge to us. The women were complaining that the pills might give them cancer and the men and the condoms reduced sensation," said Orot in Hilgaynon.

The residents were participated in the making of the village's Annual Development Plan (ADP). During the Sitio Assemblies, the council gathered comments and suggestions for improvement of village concerns that were then incorporated into the planning of activities.

These were not implemented until the final ADP was presented to the Sitio Assemblies for their approval, said Orot.

Inspiring leadership

Both Dorotheo and Orot admitted that going about good governance was not an easy task without the support of the Jordan municipal government.

The two said the absence of politicking among the municipal leaders has both helped for the people than town's 14 barangays. More than five of these barangays have been cited by the provincial and national governments for several outstanding practices in waste management, tourism, education and child-friendly practices.

The absence is mainly due to the fact that the mayor, vice mayor and all the councilors, except for one from the opposition, belonged to one party and had remained united in achieving town goals.

Good governance at the municipal level has had a "multiplier effect" on some barangays that emulated their council's leadership styles and practices, said Lenie Sorio, SCF's program coordinator in Jordan.

"Lets style is contagious. We have one silent but we go to the people to ask what they want and what is priorities. Empowerment is the key to get things done. We give the decision-making to the people," said Jordan Mayor Felipe Elias Durán, 41, a doctor and younger brother of Guimaras Gov. JC Rahmad Nava.

In an unprecedented move, the town paid P955,000 annually for the Phil-Health Insurance of 3,000 families and

KAMANGAY chair Dorotea points out the shoreline of Barangay Hoskyn in Jordan, Guimaras that is now being replanted with more mangroves.

appropriated P50,000 for the Red Cross.

Additional honorariums was also given to the town's 161 health workers and each of the 14 barangays had one Barangay Health Nurse Scholar.

Three days, Mayor Nava is satisfied with the conservation of six health centers and the renovation of two others that began through a bill grant from the Japanese Embassy that amounted to P5 million.

This is on top of three new health centers funded by the Integrated Community Health Services Project through AusAID in 2001. Three other barangays have their functional health centers.

Vice Mayor Rosie Segubre, 42, said what used to be a hindrance to good governance was the people's values.

Their commitments, he said, were resistant to interventions that may affect their livelihood even if it was for the general good, citing the slash-and-burn practices of farmers in the upland areas and fishermen who took a long time to doing away with illegal fishing methods.

"In the process of changing these values and beliefs about their community we also introduced alternative livelihood like cattle fattening, vegetable gardening and goat swapping (illegal fishing gears changed to legal ones)," said Segubre, adding that town councilors see it as a way of life but maybe misunderstood.

Jordan is the first town in the province to have a solid waste management ordinance and a landfill site now two peak in Barangay Bugasay.

There is waste segregation in all public places where trash is brought to a "material recovery facility" at the public market that uses a shredder to turn biodegradable waste into compost that is in turn brought to the sea-pack of three hectares.

"That target is zero waste management on the 11th year in the sense that the municipal government does not have to collect trash because the households can use some system their own garbage," said Segubre, a political science graduate of the University of Baliuag.

Child friendly

Jordan has been known for being child-friendly before other towns in the country seriously practiced it.

Municipal Councilor Grace Gatan, 43, testified that in 1999, she was the town's coordinator of the United's Country Program for Children (UPC) V when she met with midwives and representatives of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Rural Health Unit, Municipal Planning and Development Office and ICF.

They assessed the state of the town's children, and submitted the data to the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) in Manila for evaluation. The

and led to a success story for Jordan's children.

As a DICV Coordinator, Gatan was instrumental in become involved in putting in place child-friendly practices for Jordan.

These include Improvement and Reaffirmation of Maternal Abilities Training (Irpat), which promotes healthy relations between husbands and their wives, the Parenting Education Sessions, which educates parents and caregivers on healthy family life, child's rights and positive values and practices of child rearing, and the barangay protection for children.

These programs are implemented in collaboration with the United, MD, DSWD and the provincial government.

The DMC, with the encouragement of Governor Nava persuaded Jordan to join the search for the child-friendly municipality in 2000 by giving written test tools to the town.

Although they emerged as a runner-up, this did not dampen their spirits but encouraged them to push for legislations and programs for children.

Thus, the Jordan Children's Code was created. The Municipal Council for the Protection of Children (MCPC), and the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children were maintained and strengthened under the MCPC taking the lead jobs in monitoring, coordinating and documenting all programs related to children.

In 2002, Jordan was as the "Most Child-Friendly Town" in the country in the category for best B class municipality. Jordan was also cited as a finalist in the Ten Accomplished Youth Organizations competition in 2004, belonging to the Top 20 qualifiers.

Efficient tax collection

Mayor Nava said that he prioritized revenue collection so that the town could realize its development goals. "We went through many processes," he said. These include contracting a private tax firm to increase revenue collection, trainings on law making, and putting in place a computerized legislative tracking system and a geographic information system that organized tax collection.

But the efforts paid off to 2004 when Jordan was as "Most Outstanding Municipal Treasury Office in the Province" from the regional Bureau of Local Government Finance.

"Almost everything requires strong political will, especially the exercise of authority," said Mayor Nava who maintains a public office at the back of the municipal hall.

As for sustainability, he said the implementers of population, health and environment programs are in place "whatever the mayor will be."

"People have been trained. We have streamlined the programs in our Annex of Investment Plans with our supporting budget and policy support," said the mayor, who is serving his last term.

As things come full circle, the residents of Hoskyn and Jordan's leaders are up to the challenge of maintaining the pursuit of healthy children playing with sea cows and are confident that when it is the young ones' turn to govern, the same picture will remain.

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HONDA
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Across the NATION
Senior Editor Tony Bergonia

Vidal offers to mediate for GMA, Erap

VIDAL

By Jaime R. Balanban
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal is willing to mediate in order to reconcile President Macapagal-Arroyo and her predecessor, deposed president Joseph Estrada.

Cebu's soft-spoken prelate told reporters on Thursday he was surprised to learn that the reconciliation talks between the two did not materialize.

He said he was relieved to fly to Manila earlier this month but he did not push through his planned trip when he found out that there would no longer be any reconciliation talks between Ms Arroyo and Estrada.

Asked if Ms Arroyo and Estrada had already talked, Vidal said he did not know. But if the talks would push through, he added, he was willing to mediate.

"So far, honestly, I can't tell you. I don't know what had happened. Previously, I cried but I wasn't able to go there. It seems some quarrel would not want a reconciliation (to) to happen," he said.

Vidal said that in their earlier talks, both Ms Arroyo and Estrada expressed their willingness to reconcile but no certain conditions.

He did not say what these conditions were.

"I have gone to all of them and of course, our leaders. In fact, they have expressed willingness to reconcile with conditions. Well, I don't know if it's still feasible," said Vidal.

Vidal admitted on Thursday that he was responsible for bringing Mr Arroyo to Sarrada during the latter's first few months of detention on plunder charges now pending before the Sandiganbayan.

The Cardinal said Ms Arroyo even promised him during that first visit that she would continue working for reconciliation with the deposed leader.

Meanwhile, Vidal said he was willing to offer shelter for Estrada at the Cebu Archdiocese if the latter would be released on recognizance.

He stressed that the former president had no place of hosting the country.

"Well, of course, I can always offer my office for him. But the question is (he) in the Visayas. I can assure everybody that he is not leaving the country. He was already offered to get out of the country but he did not," Vidal said.

"So far as I am concerned, he's not interested to go out of the country. Many times he's (with) visitors, just like what happened (to) Imee Tolong (when) he had his knees operated on(,)" he added.

The Cardinal had served as spiritual advisor to Estrada when the latter was president.

Transfer of Palparan not due to pressure, says new Army chief

By Jerry E. Esplanica
PDI Visayas Bureau

CATBALOGAN, Samar—The relief of controversial Army Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan as 8th Infantry Division chief has nothing to do with the pressures exerted by congressmen and members of human rights groups in Eastern Visayas who wanted him out of the region.

Major Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Philippine Army chief, said Palparan was transferred to replace Maj. Gen. Pedrito Natividad as head of the 7th Infantry Division based in Tarlac (Magsaysay) in Iloilo.

"There's no truth to that. General Palparan was transferred to other areas where his kind of leadership is also most needed. It was not because we were pressured by some politicians or human rights groups," Esperon said.

He said the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) was an "apolitical organization" and that deployment of personnel was based on where their services were most needed.

The Army chief was here on Thursday to grace the turnover ceremony in Camp Lukban where Palparan formally relinquished his post as 8ID. He cited in his successor, Maj. Gen. Benjamin Mendoza Jr., among those who attended were different local and barangay officials of different towns in Samar.

Esperon was all praises for Palparan, saying he is known as the "czar" of the four generals of the armed forces."

He commended Palparan for his "able stewardship, which saw the effective pursuit of the commander's administrative directives and military operations" that resulted in the capture of 73 members of the New People's Army and the recovery of more than 200 firearms.

Militant groups had accused Palparan of human rights violations.

Palparan, who served the region since Feb. 13, denied allegations of military abuses against civilians in the course of his intensive campaign against insurgents, which he vowed to wipe out in six months to a year.

But Esperon said that if the allegations against Palparan were true, President Macapagal-Arroyo would not have appointed him to head a core Army division.

He brushed aside allegations leveled against Palparan, saying not a single case had been filed against the controversial general for violating human rights.

"And on top of this, he was also named by the President as head the Philippine contingent on human rights in Iraq prior to his assignment here in the region," said Esperon.

Palparan headed the Philippine contingent to Iraq in March 2004. When he returned to the country in August of the same year, he was designated as Philippine Army chief of staff.

Palparan's sudden transfer from Eastern Visayas had triggered speculations that it was due to pressures exerted by some congressmen, particularly Samar Rep. Eulalio Figueroa (2nd District), and some human rights groups.

COLORS OF DAVAO
Women belonging to the Parok Sinas Performing Arts Group from Sasa Sub., Davao City perform for the Kadayawan sa Dabaw celebration. The group's dance competition that was one of the highlights of the Kadayawan sa Dabaw celebration.

Roundup

NPA denial

DAVAO CITY—The Eber People's Army's (NPA) Sparks Agaton Command Leaders Front Operag denied it was responsible for the death threat received by Inquirer correspondent Felipe Celino in June. In a press release, computer-printed letter, written in Bisayanon, rebel spokesperson Ka Jo Dilangan said that the letter received by Celino was written by an Inquirer and that the group discussed whatever it contained. The NPA further said in addressing a release to Celino, but it would, at about three months since he received the death threat. Dilangan said the Communist Party of the Philippines or the NPA has no reason to threaten Celino because he had not done anything against the communist movement. Last June, Celino received a letter written in anonymous that threatened to "finish(him) off" for his "anti-people" activities. PDI Visayas Bureau

Girl raped, killed

BACOLOD CITY—A seven-year-old girl was raped, killed and buried in a shallow grave in Sagay City, Negros Occidental. Supt. Norberto Bustos, Sagay police chief, identified the victim as Jennylyn Mirasol Bido, a Grade 1 pupil, who had gone missing since Aug. 18. The suspect in the girl raped on Monday, when her family was too involved somewhere in a sugarcane field, a few meters from a shallow grave where the victim was buried on Barangay Puey Sagay. "The child appeared to have been hit with a blunt object on the right side of the head and her head appeared to have been twisted in strangulation," Bustos said. He said that based on the autopsy report the girl was raped before she was killed. Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Bomb defused

COTABATO CITY—Government troops defused an improvised explosive device (IED) found in Barangay Cotabato on Wednesday, the military said. Lt. Col. Rogelio Capoylan, commander of the Army's 602nd Brigade (Independent), said the military operation was launched after residents informed them of the IED. Capoylan said residents reported the explosive device to the Army's Camp Siongco at around 10 a.m. on Wednesday. Capoylan said the IED was found in Barangay Cotabato on the road leading to Barangay Kalanganan. Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

3 militiamen slain

COTABATO CITY—Armed men ambushed and killed three members of a civilian militia group in Sharif Aguak, Maguindanao on Wednesday, the military said. The victims, Datu Kalu Mampis, 48, and a certain Rukmo, both residents of Mamu, Sharif Aguak, and their aide-de-camp Sangkay Pinkhasan in Sharif Aguak at about 9:30 a.m. while en route to the suspects, Maj. Gen. Agapito Denna Jr., commander of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said the armed men positioned themselves on the roadside and at the highway in Barangay Village and fired at the jeep driven by Mampis. Arthur Molon, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Robbers take computers

SIA, Zamboanga—Robbers broke into a computer shop in Siaya on Thursday and took away P100,000 worth of computers and cash. Senior Supt. Edgardo Lukan, Zamboanga police director, said the suspects used a bolt cutter to destroy the padlocks of the Cyber Bits computer shop in Barangay Zone II. Then, Lukan said the robbers entered the shop for some 2 a.m. and 3 a.m. Police Chief Inspector Lukan said robbers also struck at a refrigerated in Barangay San Ignacio on Wednesday night. Police said at least three water pumps used by farmers in Barangay Kalanganan were also stolen. Evelyn Wilo, PDI Central Luzon Desk

MILF sends team to stop clan war in Zambo del Sur town

COTABATO CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has sent a peacekeeping team in Datu, Zamboanga del Sur to help pacify and resolve the bloody feud involving two powerful Muslim families.

The MILF, in coordination with the government's Coordinating Committee on Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH), dispatched the team with instructions to immediately stop the fratricidal war.

More than 10 persons, including Datu Piso Mayor Abdullahadi Mandeog, who was ambushed and killed with five others on July 17, have already died because of the clan feud.

The latest conflict started early this year when MILF forces, including women on board pump boats, were attacked by Sunday Ungas forces after attending a peace assembly ground by members of the International Monitoring Team.

Five MILF rebels were killed in the attack.

Their alleged assailants, despite being members of Bantay Ungas, a paramilitary group, were also sympathizers of the LDDLF.

On July 16, the MILF sent a team in an effort to convince the families to enter an amicable settlement.

During the negotiations, members of the warring families signed a covenant against using violence to solve their disputes.

But for unknown reasons, Mandeog and several bodyguards were waylaid by an unidentified armed group, believed to belong to another clan.

The team that was sent was to be notified as lightly armed and composed of political and military personalities. Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Cops lament role as scapegoats in 'jueteng'

CAMP DATU INDUMING ULIMAN, Buena Vista—Policemen here are complaining that they have always been blamed for the resurgence of jueteng, lamenting that some "unscrupulous politicians" have actually demanded the return of the illegal numbers game.

The policemen's complaints came out on the heels of new senior police officials here on Tuesday for the reported resumption of jueteng operations in their areas.

Chief Supt. Jefferson Soriano, Cagayan police director, relieved Supt. James Abella, deputy provincial police director, and Chief Insp. Dionisio de Guzman, Buyandong police chief.

Abella and De Guzman were ordered to report to the regional headquarters service group at the regional police office in Camp Aduluro, Tuguegarao City. However, Soriano's order did not specify the reasons for their relief.

On Tuesday, Philippine Narcotics Police officials here announced that the two officials' relief was caused by the resurgence of jueteng here.

For the past months, the illegal numbers game had followed on cat-and-off pattern in the province. As of Thursday, no collections have reportedly stopped.

But a police official in the province sympathized with his relieved colleagues who, like many other police officers, have often been singled out as "convenient handles" to the drive against jueteng.

It has become an "open secret," the police source said, that illegal gambling can never thrive in an area without the consent of local officials, especially mayors.

"If these (officials) were jueteng and sex czars, they will have an incentive to(d) it we give in, we are relieved. Do the (PNP leadership), to whom are we supposed to stand?" the police source said.

They have we heard of any local official who has been suspended or even investigated because jueteng has resurfaced in his area? None," he said.

The source, however, declined to name the politicians who demanded the resumption of the jueteng operations here.

The decision reached Abella but he declined to comment on his relief and the supposed resumption of jueteng operations at some areas in the province.

Dr. Guzman, meanwhile, had left for Tuguegarao City, members of his staff here said.

But Senior Insp. Robert Mangaoang, Nueva Vizcaya police director, denied that he had been "pressured" by politicians who wanted the illegal numbers game restored. Melvin Mencias, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, with reports from Dennis Orcino, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Taxi group seeks P15 flag down hike

By Clarissa S. Santos

A 3000 group is poised to ask the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) for a P15 increase in the current flag down rate of P10.

Ben Tumbas, president of the Philippine National Taxi Operators Association (PNTOA), said yesterday the group would like to have hike petition next week.

Tumbas said his group, which operates some 12,000 units, would not increase the "boundary" (amount operators get at the end of a shift) required of cab drivers.

Taxi drivers pay operators P600-P1,200 each day. Those driving older vehicles usually want P700-P800 to cub operators. Drivers also shoulder gasoline costs.

The last hike, Tumbas said, would benefit drivers, not operators. It would cover a portion of the fuel price increases since October last year when each taxi raised their rate.

A liter of gasoline now costs more than P32, up from about P30 last year.

Tumbas said his group would not ask for any other adjustment apart from the flag down rate so as not to let too much of a burden to consumers.

The current flag down rate is P30, after which cabs charge P5.50 for every succeeding 300 meters and P2.50 for every two minutes of waiting time.

LTFRB chair Maria Elena Bautista said taxi drivers prefered not to increase fares so as not to lose passengers.

Jeepney groups are also planning to seek an additional P1 to P2 hike in fare when the price of diesel hit P34 a liter.

But Bautista said the P2 increase approved by the board recently for jeeps and buses was still inadequate for an increase of up to P35 a liter.

Transport leaders also said they were looking into reached consensus between a taxi bureau.

Pipoi Mendoza, lawyer for the transport groups, said drivers and operators wanted the government to suspend the emission testing requirement for cigarettes that cost P1,500 per unit.

The government must also implement immediately the no-loading/unloading ban along Banawe street, which approval has been pending at the Department of Public Works, Transportation and Communication for years now.

Transport groups also sought another suspension of duties and taxes on imported spare parts and wheels, which the government did before the May 2004 elections.

Jeepney operators had been set on asking for financial support and incentives so they could explore alternative fuels like liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), according to Mendoza.

Sunday said his group had tried to secure incentives for taxi units that would be using LPG.

There has been no feedback from the government on the issue, he said.

Spiderman wannabe to face charges

By Margie C. Oria

JOSELITO Ramos attempts a stunt yesterday as he dolly crossed electric wires and telephone cables at Recto Avenue in Manila, evading firemen who tried to rescue him from perilous perch. MYLA CRUZ

FOR MORE than two hours, he was Spiderman.

Some 40 year-old Joselito Ramos of Bulacan, Bulacan said he'll have to face charges and scandal charges for scaling a Meralco post and trying to walk on electric wires late yesterday morning in Manila.

"He stood seven traffic posts... became a large crowd gathered to watch him," Sgt. Reinaldo Sagitsa of Police Station 5 chief, said in an interview.

The police was called when Ramos, in shorts, was seen on top of the Meralco post at the corner of Recto Avenue and Evangelista Street around 10:30 a.m.

Manoeuvring unintelligibly for about for several minutes before attempting to walk on the electric wires to get to another post.

Sagitsa said they had asked Meralco to turn off the electricity in the high voltage wires.

"Ramos was either mentally unstable or drug crazed," Sagitsa said.

Ramos threw his wallet at the crowd below, identification cards, if these were his, indicated he had worked as a caregiver for an advertising firm.

Ramos gave the names of certain newspaper reporters and police officials like Mabini station commander Supt. Maximino Nolasco, who did not recognize him. He was brought down by policemen with the help of a cherry-picker more than two hours, and taken to the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center for extended examination.

MetroBriefs

1 dead in Mandaluyong fire

ONE WOMAN managed to get out of her burning room. An early two-storey Mabolo 4 fanciful, 38, was killed after a three-hour fire ate up the fourth floor of a medium-rise apartment/store in Mandaluyong City the other night. Two firefighters were also injured after residents panicked and tried grabbing water hoses. Mandaluyong Fire Department (FD) Senior Inspector Ben Dela Cruz said inside Room 407 in the decades-old Building 5 in the Gamboa Issues Condominium Inc. in Barangay Barangka from about 6 p.m. Thursday. Neighbors told fire officials they saw a commotion inside the room as Luspad By the time family members, they heard an explosion. The fire quickly spread to the adjacent room, where Francisco and her family lived. Relatives told investigators that Francisco, apart from being confined to bed, also mentally ill. The fire alarm station was raised to Task Force Bravo at 8:15p.m. Firefighters arrived, confronted by a swarm of billowing blankets, almost in panic. Some bystanders were reported with the operation of the water hoses, causing a backflow to occur, allowing a huge volume of water to rush in. The backward the water hose averaging at 80L. The metal joint holding C/I Ramon Eugenio broke off shank, leaving a deep wound. He was rushed to a small aide (ER) in Barangay who also sustained head injuries. Taking advice, Firefighters Jose Ramos and Ian Sandy Dela Cruz, both 28, were overcome by smoke. Both were taken to the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center for treatment. Dela Cruz was in good condition. Ramos suffered minor damages. Tabios estimated the damage at P2 million. Neighbors related the fire was triggered by a cooking liquefied petroleum gas tank. Alison Santos Jr.

Alex's turn this time

BACOLOD CITY — Alex Urbano Cesario yesterday had child abuse charges against his housemate at the Bacolod City prosecutor's office. Accused respondents were 19-year-old Mark Ian Dela and Erika Francisco, 40, who allegedly maltreated Cesario's daughter. In his complaint-affidavit the child of deceased City Prosecutor Constantino Cesario, 14-year-old Cesario, who was recently separated from her husband because of her alleged maltreatment by two of her housemates at his apartment in Barangay Villamonte. Cesario said after Father Bautista and the maid who left their house on June 27, psychologically and physically abused his daughter during the time that she was supposed to care for her. He said that his son again and his daughter's sister when he came to visit her at their condominium unit in Damosa City. According to the traumatized kids, his daughter would tell a neighbor's maid that Bautista and her sister subjected her to torture. Nancy C. Carvajal

CESARIO

Unexpected catch

QUEZON (with its current successful operations of the Makati Police Department (MPD) revamped drive) on a sprawling squatter's colony, east of Makati's business capital, is the MPD Crime Laboratory.

Here, a team of forensic experts collect evidence from suspects already.

But while the police were able to find only three of their targets, the successful operation led to the bust of eight drug suspects caught red-handed while allegedly holding a pot session around 4 p.m. yesterday, inside the Lapu-Lapu Compound in Guadalupe Nuevo, Makati City. Police said the eight, all from the compound before daybreak, MPD operations spotted the men and three women reportedly smoking pot in an outdoor billiard hall, the MPD crime laboratory Director (CSD) said. "We had one taste of a raid against suspects all living in Lapu-Lapu Compound. During the operation, the operatives were suppose other barangay personnel on. Since they were caught to tail when while conducting a raid, they were arrested. ... there was no warrant necessary for this," said chief Inspector Manuel Santos Jr. (MPD) chief. Those arrested were Ernesto Cabrera, 44; Jose Labrador, 31; Roberto Cortez, 33; Ronald Reta, 29; Bryan Perez, 22; all from Guadalupe Nuevo, and the seven who were from Barangay Bangkal, Makati, Gamboa City resident. Tarra S. Quismundo

Striking garbage collectors a 'minority'

By Jocelyn R. Uy
and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

MANILA's garbage problem has become a battle of two unions.

Eduardo Ribon, barangay officers and organizers of the Iloilo Scavengers Employees Association (ISTEG), lashed claims of the Samahan ng mga Manggagawa sa San Transport Association of Democratic Labor Organizations (Smart-ALGO) the other day that garbage collectors in the city proper of Iloilo in Manila had been paralyzed.

"The public has nothing to worry about because the workers are still committed to [their Nanay para]," Ribon told the reporter yesterday over the phone.

He said ISTEG, composed of 600 employees, was the legitimate and recognized union of the waste collection company as the union of Smart-ALGO, had already lost the majority of its members.

The ISTEG, set up in January, was registered and recognized by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) last week. It was recognized by the management, giving it the sole and exclusive right to represent regular rank-and-file workers in collective bargaining negotiations and other labor issues, he added. ISTEG, Ribon stressed, did not support the strike. With only 50-100 people on strike, San Transport's operation was not, in any way, paralyzed, he claimed.

The ISTEG denounced the harassment and intimidation of workers who refused to join or sympathize with Smart-ALGO's strike.

Workers were allegedly ran badly attacked and threatened, ISTEG documented instances where trucks were blocked, he claimed.

"We are not condemning the strike but the way it is being conducted," Ribon said.

The ISTEG assured the public garbage collection in San Juan, Mandaluyo, Navotas and Quezon City would continue. The claim seemed to be ended as San Juan Mayor Jr Ejercito said garbage collection remained normal in his town.

But the private garbage hauler must less than the eight trucks it uses to San Juan every night.

The public sector management office asked private hauler Greenline to take over where San Transport trucks were not available.

Scrap lab fees for dengue cases - DOH

By Nancy C. Carvajal

MANILA — Secretary Francisco Duque yesterday said he would order all government hospitals to waive consultation and laboratory fees particularly for dengue cases, after listening to the complaints aired by members of a people's organization based in Quezon City.

Duque met with residents from Barangay Bagong Pagasa during a dialogue conducted by Mayor Feliciano Belmonte yesterday.

The barangay has recorded around 18 deaths arising from dengue, although the city health office said they only had between nine and ten deaths in the last one of 12 barangays.

Health secretary's announcement stemmed from an emotional complaint by a resident that a neighbor's son was reportedly refused treatment by the East Avenue Medical Center and the Quezon City General Hospital after the boy's parents were not able to pay the P300 laboratory fee. Duque also promised to investigate the incident and said that any hospital employee found guilty of the offense would be fined.

The residents, members who belong to the Bagong Pagasa Homeowners Association, called for a ban on the exhaust of a new born baby who died in May but is still being held at the Philippine Children's Medical Center. Duque, because the parents had not been able to pay the P1,750 hospital bill. Duque assured the baby's parents, Jenilyn and Mr. Cristina Rabanes, that he would arrange the immediate release of their baby's body.

Belmonte, for his part, told residents the city would put up a health station to be area to monitor dengue cases.

Earlier, the City Health Department launched a massive information campaign to raise the level of awareness of city residents in the fight against dengue.

Abusive police officers

ON TARGET
RAYMUND FAVILA

OUR POLICE officers are probably among the world's most abusive. A Filipino cop can arrest a citizen and send him to jail if he doesn't like his looks.

But the government doesn't want to cure. It is slow in punishing abusive cops.

SPO2 Herbie Gaudo of the Quezon City Police District is one such abusive cop.

Gaudo manhandled a homeless child, Michelle Bautista, 10 (Salamat-ang, Bautista recently became the area watching for a family that Gaudo is having a rift with.

The poor homeless could only cry. How Gaudo is harassing her so she would withdraw the complaint I helped her file to Camp Crame.

Gaudo is a member of the Police Anti-Crime and Emergency Response (PACER) unit. He is notorious in the neighborhood for kicking even small children who get in his way when he's drunk.

In his another pending case in the Quezon City Police Department's Internal Affairs Service.

But the case, filed several years ago, is not moving. The case is for child abuse. Gaudo beat up a seven-year-old child for being noisy.

There are thousands of Gaudos in the Philippine National Police (PNP). Their cases are pending at the National Police Commission (Napolcom), the PNP's Internal Affairs Service, the police regional offices, and the Ombudsman's Law Enforcement Board (PAO) and other courts.

But the hearings or trials of the administrative or criminal cases against cops hardly move at all.

PUP studes clean up Manila Bay

By Tina G. Santos

MANY did not accept the Manila Bay cleanup project of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP).

The determined participants, armed with rakes, shovels and sacks, filled up trucks with bamboo, wood, plastic, food wrappers and pieces of rubber and styrofoam from Manila Bay.

Some 1,000 Civic Welfare Training Services (CWTS) students, officers and faculty members of PUP along with employees of Manila's Department of Public Services (DPS) parked around the shore.

The clean-up was the first major project of the PUP CWTS for the semester, project coordinating director Serafin Barte said in a letter to Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

"The students want to put into action the message of the Human Summit, which is unity, as they dismantle their lives for the environment," she said.

PUP made it in the Guinness Book of World Records when it formed the world's largest human rainbow as part of its centennial celebration last year.

DPS chief Rafael Bartumeo said they welcomed PUP's efforts but added the city government cleaned the bay regularly.

"Unfortunately, we are the trash basin (of garbage). Manila is low lying, and trash from other cities accumulates here," he said.

The Bayanik, with its pungent, pesty odor, was developed by Atienza into an attractive beach-cited, until its rainbow army.

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SCHOOL children take advantage of free computer lessons inside a 40-foot trailer truck converted into a computer learning facility on wheels. The trailer contains 20 PC workstations and is currently parked in front of Barangay Bagong Pag-asa where it will stay for one month.

FREE COMPUTER LESSONS

School on wheels cruises QC

By Dil Pup

AN ANSWER to the "digital divide" between the rich and the poor in this information age is parked right across a squatter colony in Barangay Pag-asa along Agham Road in Quezon City.

This school-on-wheels taught Jason, a young man in his '30s, how to use a computer. It also gave him a shot at a decent job. Today, he is the secretary of his barangay.

Jason owes his luck to a secondhand 28-foot van that served as his classroom for five weeks some time in the summer of 2004.

Six more than a year now, a computer school on wheels has been quietly visiting the city streets, teaching needy residents like Jason the basics of computer learning.

From out-of-school youths to their grandparents, Quezon City Councilor Bernadette Herrera-Dy (reelectee), the Bagong Henerasyon Computer School-On-Wheels, has taught some 2,500 poor residents in more than 20 barangays — for free.

Nine instructors, who are themselves graduates of Herrera's computer school, teach eager students courses in Basic Application Software, Basic Secretarial, Desktop Publishing and Basic Technician inside the air-conditioned van. The students get hands-on training through the 20 computers inside the van, said Herrera.

The van is now parked in Sitio Ano Bayan, Barangay Pag-asa where it will stay until the end of the month for a five-day course on Basic Application Software. The course has attracted 80 students.

The project is the result of a P1.2 million grant from the Asia-EU PROAP of the Australian Embassy, after Herrera's concept paper on a computer school on wheels received rating the first Philippine Development Innovation Marketplace competition conducted by the World Bank in January 2004.

Herrera's concept was simple enough. Recycle a used 20-footer container van, convert it into a mobile classroom, outfit it with computers and peripherals, haul it to par-abroad, far-to-get barangays, park it beside the barangay halls or any suitable vacant lot, tap the electric mains of the barangay and turn on the power. "Presto, you have a fully operational computer learning center," Herrera said. The school will stay parked for five weeks in each location.

Initially, the target was to educate out-of-school youth or out-of-work youth in each barangay. But Herrera said the project soon involved much older students. "When boys and girls come with their parents, of course, we can't turn them away," she said. The youngest graduate so far was a five-year-old, the oldest was 60.

She said there had been many success stories from the roving computer school. "I was walking along SM North, when this girl approached me and said she was a graduate of CSW (computer school-on-wheels), Herrera said.

"She was thankful because she was able to find a job at Gilt Gate after learning how to use a computer," the councilor added.

Herrera said a digital divide threatened to widen the gap between the rich and the poor. "Educating the less fortunate youth of our country is necessary in order to bridge this gap," she said.

Kemp needs your help

SEVEN-YEAR-OLD Kemp Pring is now confined at the Philippine Heart Center for a congenital heart disease. Kemp and his mother, Vilma, are appealing to kindhearted readers to help him raise funds for his operation which is estimated to cost P411,000. Interested donors may contact Vilma at 09193-404840, or assist their donations through her BPI/MS account no. 8191-0102-62.

Gaudencio Aquino, 65

GAUDENCIO "Boy" Isorla Aquino of Sta. Lucia, Roxas City, passed away at the Philippine Heart Center last Aug. 24. He is survived by wife Wenie Villanueva-Aquino; children Bernadeth, Dawn Marie, Tiffany Rose, and Dennis Lee; son-in-law Danny Urquico; Wilfredo del Rosario; and five grandchildren. Interment will be on Sunday, at the Holy Cross Memorial Park in Sowilo,Sta after the 1 p.m. Mass at the Arlington Memorial Chapel.

SATURDAY
AUGUST 27, 1995

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

92
22nd SEA Games

Fil-Am spiker seeks RP slot

RP-SMB cagers survive 'brothers' Alaska Aces

BRUNEI—Keeping its cards close to its chest and flaunting just enough to position itself for a championship run, the RP-San Miguel Beer team rallied in fourth straight victory, edging the Alaska Aces, 75-71, Thursday night in the 5th Shell Rimula Cup at the National Indoor Stadium.

TOMP dela Cruz squeezes with IT points.

Fil-Am spiker seeks RP slot

A PROFESSIONAL beach volleyball player in the United States may yet join the Philippine women's contingent in the 22nd Southeast Asian Games volleyball competitions in Baseball City.

Fil-Am Brad Ogden, who is 28 years old and stands 6-foot-10, has said he's undecided as to the Philippine-American volleyball Association and promises to come to the country before the Games begin on Nov. 27. She is competing in the opening tournament of Professional Beach Volleyball Tour.

...

INTERNATIONAL basketball federation president Lee Ching Monday said the pending in any day after Sept. 15th clear the stalemate in the Philippine Olympic Committee and the newly formed Philippine Basketball Federation.

Monday will be evaluating the Filoy's case investigation regarding the Games that resulted in the suspension of the Philippines from tournaments organized and run by the fifty.

The chairman of the country not being able to take part in the basketball championships of the coming SEA Games large as are and in the FIBA and FIBA as the actual association of the Philippines quarrels tonight.

BRUNEI—Keeping its cards close to its chest and flaunting just enough to position itself for a championship run, the RP-San Miguel Beer team rallied in fourth straight victory, edging the Alaska Aces, 75-71, Thursday night in the 5th Shell Rimula Cup at the National Indoor Stadium.

"It's very hard to play against your brothers and teammates because we developed a close relationship with the other team," said tattooed coach Chot Reyes.

The Aces are headed by RP assistant Tim Cone, and two of its players—Sonny Thoss and Mike Cortez—are members of the SB pool. On the other hand, Tony dela Cruz, who led the Robusale with 17 points including nine in the pivotal period, will start a new chapter of his career in the PBA with rookie this season.

"It was fun and a great opportunity to play against your new brother team," said the 6-foot-4 dela Cruz, acquired in a preseason deal with the disbanded Shell squad, along with rebounding and defensive whiz Nick Alanes. "I just hope I can do with Alaska what I got to."

With the semifinals looming and the postings yet to be finalized, the Pilipinas held back from testing out new things to prevent teams from scouting them.

"We didn't want to show too much to other teams," explained Reyes.

With the victory, several semifinal scenarios cropped up.

RP-SMB, finished in elimination round campaign with a 4-1 win-loss mark, the only stiffest coming at the hands of Anyone's Fuddo-Power Pioneers (4-0).

The Japanese play South Korea (4) Singles (2-1) on Friday to determine the semifinal pairings.

A win by the Japanese squad will put the Robusale at the No. 2 spot and set up a semifinal duel against the Koreans.

Alaska, which is expected to beat the lowly Mavericks all four shoot Friday will duke down to No. 4 unbeaten Toshiba.

If the SB Singles, who lost a tough 97-95 decision to RP-SMB Wednesday night, wins by less than 11 points, a three-way tie will be created at the top spot among the Matsushita, the Koreans and the Japanese.

In that case, the RP-SMB gets the top spot by virtue of a higher quotient, thus forging a meeting with the Aces in the semifinals.

"Even my grow-saving nonsense (That's what we don't want to happen)," said Reyes, who also got 10 points and seven rebounds from Art Espiritu.

But if the SB Singles beat the RP, Super League champions by at least 11, the Aces must take the No. 1 seed and meet Alaska in the final four on Saturday.

RP-SMB and Toshiba make up the other semifinal pairing, a scenario Reyes does hopes to avoid.

"Hopefully Toshiba beats SB Singles on Friday," Reyes said. "We want to play the SB Singles in the semis."

The Japanese stunned the Nationals, 89-86, in their first game in the four-nation tournament.

But Alaska (1-3) will get a big boost with the arrival of Jeffrey Cariaso in time for the semifinals. Cariaso attended the wedding of his sister Jaybe Cariaso Daniel in Manila.

Ronnel Ablaza did not suit up for the Mavericks as he sprained his right ankle during practice, but his absence was heavily felt by Bryan and Billy Ebarle Daniel Bentley Raymundo stepped up his time.

Dela Cruz's jumper put the Pilipinas comfortably ahead at 68-57, exactly seven minutes left in the game, but the Aces responded with a 9-4 exchange to threaten at 66-72, 2:17 left in the game.

Chito's Hongkong Lions finally found their fire was ruthless by whipping the Beyond-based Warriors all day, 114-76.

Toyota

RP-SMB 78—Cruz (no. 3) Santos 12, Alanes 11, Ablaza 9, Espiritu 7, Reyes 6, Cortez 5, Ebarle 3, Bentley 2, Raymundo 2, Alfonso 0.

Alaska 71—Alfaro 19, Jones 17, Dionisio 10, Cariaso 9, Ebarle 8, Mallari 5, Pinto 3, Ablaza 0, Alfonso 0, Cruz 0, Pinto 0.

Scores

RP-SMB 78—Cruz (no. 3) Santos 12, Alanes 11, Ablaza 9, Espiritu 7, Reyes 6, Cortez 5, Ebarle 3, Bentley 2, Raymundo 2, Alfonso 0.

Alaska 71—Alfaro 19, Jones 17, Dionisio 10, Cariaso 9, Ebarle 8, Mallari 5, Pinto 3, Ablaza 0, Alfonso 0, Cruz 0, Pinto 0.

Stags upset Dolphins; kill semis suspense

By Jasmine W. Payo

PHOTO BOOTH: Leo Najorda made four free throws—sinking an elbow to the back in between—to lead San Sebastian to a pulsating 65-71 upset of defending champion Philippine Christian U yesterday and kill the semifinal suspense in the NCAA basketball tournament at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Najorda and Joel Nicanor provided the Stags with a solid 1-2 punch that plotted the entire 40-minute stretch. Najorda drilled in 20 points and 12 rebounds. Nicanor added 18 and 10 boards.

"We don't want to leave anymore problems," said Stags coach Jun Valenzona. "I commend Najorda for playing his best even if he's already going to the PBA."

The Stags thus completed the Final Four cast, composed of the Letran Knights (11-1), the first place (9-3) and the Mapua Cardinals (8-4), and drubbing the door on hopeful University of Perpetual Help and Colleges of St. Benilde.

Only the Knights, though, have secured the twice-to-beat advantage in the semifinal round. Both the Stags (7-5) could still forge a playoff for the second spot, which comes with the twice-to-beat bonus.

Playing the comedy writing, the Blazers still put on a show of competitiveness, turning the line Belle Liene to continue 51-46, in the second game. Rookie forward Marvin Orit led St. Benilde with 23 points.

Najorda, picked early enough by Red Bull in the recent PBA rookie draft, shattered the game's final deadlock with two free throws in BC the Stags, 77-75, at the 1:27 mark.

He sealed the game with two more baskets for the final score with still 22.3 seconds left after making one-of-two on the back from PCU's near-miss 3-point Espinosa, who was slapped with an unsportsmanlike foul.

The Stags were on top at 72-68, but a Dolphins dunge capped by a Jecco Cortez three-pointer tied the game at 75.

In the earlier game, the Jobo Dolphins dashed the hopes of the Stags, 87-81. The Stags have the win-loss record (7-5) with 1-2 tiebreaker at 1-1.

THE DOLPHINS' Michael Baltazar finds himself trapped by the defense of (from left) Stags' Leo Najorda and Ernest Delgado.

UST battles Hope Christian in jr. volley tilt

ACROSS in the Skaters Girls Volleyball league encounter tomorrow at Chinese Hope Christian University will battle the University of the Tomas facing last year's third runner-up Hope Christian in one of four matches at the UST gym.

UST is eyeing its third straight win over at 9:00 a.m. in the Junior Tigers sponsored by Hotdog's and supported by John's Sports, Bone & Fortune, Kamille Cream, Lollypop, Jasmine 200 and sunCard.

The other games set for La Salle-Lipa against Ateneo Institute at 11 a.m., University of the East against Philippine Institute of TC at 1:30 p.m. and St. Francis Junior Ranger against Ateneo-Nasugbu High at 2:30 p.m.

Hope Christian has at a 1-0 record with Colegio San Agustin, St. Francis Secondary, UE and De La Salle-Lipa.

PBSC counter is 11-0 while followed by ICA Generals (8-3), E. Rosario High (7-1), UPD (7-2), Jesus School (6-2) and Philippine Prep (5-2).

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THE TRUTH ABOUT LOVE
SISTERHOOD OF TRAVELING PANTS
CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
THE LONGEST YARD
SKELETON KEY
THE GREAT RAID
MUST LOVE DOGS
BEWITCHED
ALI MALL CINEMAS
1 THE GREAT RAID
2 THE LONGEST YARD
3 THE TRUTH ABOUT LOVE
4 VALIANT
5 D' ANOTHERS
ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
SYMPHONY OF THE HEART: GARY V
ADIDAS ASIAN STREETBALL FINALS 2005
THE CHICADEES ENCORE
CENTER EVENTS
SALE EVENT
All Mall Fashionista Fair ongoing until August 31. Thrifty shopping! Score the coolest looks while still going easy on your wallet!
PERFORMANCES
Cool Live Jazz at the Gateway Drive featuring Affinity with Cecky Chua tonight at 8pm
EXHIBIT
Pala Ari Exhibit ongoing until August 30 at the Level 2 LRT Concourse Area of Gateway Mall

Daungs monthly darthest tonight

(AUG) worth P10,000 will be in earlier guide to the Daungs Cancer Club monthly carnival to be held tonight of the Pantages Theatre in Makati.

Mode of play to be elevation doubles round in VCC (Alpha 41-A/XXX) Lefty Nerd 9/10 elevation (Omega Alpha). Registration starts at 7:30pm on which game range until 8:30. An entry fee of P200 per entry. Refreshments will be served. For free, the following spaces available for the tournament: Saturday at Daungs Restaurant.

Las Piñas stagfest final starts

THE (NAMEN) Festival of Arts Association of Las Piñas Inc. Grup Derby starts at 1 p.m. today at the Las Piñas City Cultural Center. Event is backed by Las Piñas Mayor Vergel Aguilar, Vice Mayor Jun Aguilar, Vice Mayor Jun Aguilar, Vice Mayor Jun

WHAT'S INSIDE

Abolitz to invest P6B in power B2
Breaktime: The poor and the SEC B2
Mining, agri yields to boost GDP B4

BUSINESS

Editor Raul G. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Cecile S. Mariano

Gov't warned against giving oil subsidies

US firm says future effects more painful

By Michelle V. Remo

AMERICAN investment bank Morgan Stanley has warned against the granting of oil subsidies by governments as a way to ease the impact of unabated oil price increases, saying such a move would result in an economic drag in the long term.

While oil subsidies would demand the handout of large spending cuts or forbearance, and increasing cost of consumption for consumers, Morgan Stanley said a world also awash in sufficiently low prices that, in turn, would spur more demand.

The oil problem could likely a central point by continuously growing demand by large economies like that of China and the United States.

"The future payback [of granting subsidies] is more painful than if the economy has been left to weather the shock because subsidies suppress demand and increase the subsidy bill," the investment bank said in its research paper titled "The Ugly Face of Fuel Subsidies."

Subsidies could even lead to more bouts of fuel shortages in the future, it warned.

As it tends to suppress demand, economists said the ill effects of granting subsidies would be worse for countries that heavily depended on imported oil like the Philippines.

The government would also be forced to shell out more funds as a growing demand for oil would require budget support for subsidies—a scenario which the cash-starved Arroyo administration would not be able to shrug off.

The country, which imports almost 90 percent of its crude oil requirements, has been reeling from the unexpected sharp rise in world oil prices. (See related story on this page.)

The National Economic and Development Authority was forced to revise to a more conservative figure its gross domestic product (GDP) growth target for this year due to the effects of skyrocketing oil prices earlier in January. From the original target range of 5.5 to 6.5 percent, the government now expects GDP growth at 5.1 percent this year.

(CONTINUED ON B3)

TRADER's work at the oil futures pit at the New York Mercantile Exchange. Light sweet crude for October delivery fell 13 cents on $67.23 a barrel after reaching an intraday peak of $70.03. AP

Oil pauses, holds above $67/barrel

SINGAPORE—Oil eased from record highs but kept above $67 a barrel yesterday due to fears of disruptions in US supplies, with oil and gas workers in the Gulf of Mexico being evacuated because of Hurricane Katrina.

The lofty prices are creating worries over economic growth as governments, businesses and consumers suffer from high fuel bills.

US light crude was down 56 cents at $67.11 a barrel after hitting $68 in one point on Thursday, the highest since U.S. crude futures started trade in 1983.

London Brent crude was down 39 cents at $65.94.

A subsidiary Mars has an expanding oil refining ring for fuel collected in the north, an Iraqi oil official said, adding to existing supply concerns.

The well produces 7,000 to 10,000 [illegible]

Tan completes PNB deal; merger with Allied seen

By Elizabeth C. Sarabia

TAN

[illegible] Lucio Tan Group after the Tan group completed [illegible] the purchase of P6.14 billion worth of shares in Philippine National Bank, bringing the aggregate ownership of the Tan group in PNB to 77 percent.

Domingo Ong, PNB director and spokesperson for the Lucio Tan group, said in a briefing yesterday that a merger between Allied Bank and PNB is quite logical. It is one that may [illegible] closer to that. I think it makes sense. Mr. Tan always says we need a strong bank," Ong said.

Tan will be the biggest privatization deal since 1997, the PNB said in news [illegible] two strong banks, according to Philippine Stock Exchange Corp. president Ricardo Tan.

The national government's share in the sales proceeds is P3.198 billion while PCIC will get P6.14 billion.

Credit rating agency Fitch Ratings earlier noted that a merger between PNB and Allied Bank, the 11th biggest bank in terms of assets, would make the merged entity the third largest bank in the country.

The PNB sale was completed in three block sales at the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday.

The government is now left with a 22.6 percent stake in PNB or 77 million shares. Of this, the government is required to sell the majority [illegible] within two to three years.

Tan's group is required to sell 22 million shares or roughly 5 percent to small investors or [illegible] The same price it sold the shares to the Lucio Tan group. PNB closed at P56 a share yesterday.

Ong said the Tan group has invested 40 centavos [illegible] to maintain as the board.

If the Tan Group exercises its warrants into shares in PNB, the group will own 84.22 percent in PNB and the government's stake will be reduced to 6.66 percent. The group [illegible] 20 to convert the warrants.

The PNB deal followed two other major bank acquisitions in the past months—Bank of the Philippine Islands' purchase of Prudential Bank and Bank of the Commonwealth's [illegible] PCI Bank.

The poor and the SEC

TODAY we talk about the SEC, the one and only Securities and Exchange Commission, the police of the business sector.

Based on news reports which quoted an anonymous SEC official (who must be so dumb, he could not even remember his own name), it seems the SEC is cracking its nuts on whether this poor company called CAP went and for all.

That is the famous pre-need College Insurance Plan, the country's biggest seller of education plans, with some 800,000 planholders.

By creating a so-called management committee in CAP manned by SEC people, the SEC, in effect takes over operations in which it knows close to nothing, except perhaps assigning fat salaries to its people in the committee.

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NOT ONLY that, word from the anonymous SEC official was that the commissioners were actually rooting for the liquidation of the business.

In other words, those thousands of poor holders of CAP education plans will not get everything that they are entitled to, under their plans, thanks to the SEC. That's why the anonymous SEC official hides his identity: You know—an bully!

If you say something like that, as if you are playing god over the lives of thousands of people, you better be ready for a little years of public lynching.

***

EITHER the anonymous SEC official is the remote part of the male genitalia, or he has a not-so-hidden agenda, such as the total demonetization of the pre-need industry.

Anyway, the pre-need sector is basically 98 times-owned. Killing it will be a big favor to the insurance industry which is dominated by giants foreign multinationals.

Looking such a supposedly confidential plan of the SEC to media, actually is a rare way to evade public trust in the company.

And in a business like CAP's, you must cut as public trust, more than on anything else, because people give you money in exchange for your ... well, promises.

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THUS, by leaking the SEC plan to media, the committing cowardly anonymous SEC official is probably the case of CAP.

The SEC still has to consider the argument of CAP on why the SEC should not take over its business of liquidation, before the SEC can actually decide anything.

The CAP case of course involves the famous 60%, the "actuarial reserve liability" which the SEC imposed on the pre-need industry five years ago.

The 60% forces the pre-need companies to set aside, today, all of the money they pay for the pre-need plans way into the future—some 20 to 30 years from today.

Until CAP comes up with the money to do that, the SEC is holding back the renewal of its business license.

And that is the first step to the apparent scheme to destroy the company: It denies CAP the much needed cash flow. Any business without cash flow newly dies.

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Bautista III

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AFTER this same CAP got groggy from the SEC punches on its cash flow, the SEC thinks it is time for the full takeover of the business—for the kill.

That should make some SEC officials make more money for themselves.

You see, in the entire pre-need industry, they are still talking about the alleged conspiracy among top government officials to kill the industry.

How much money changed hands in such a fantasy cobbe—ents, "statements," jobs, even received honorable mention in a congressional inquiry on the industry.

But now, there was the top secret study on the industry, done by a US based organization, which was funded by the US government, which in turn got its money from US big business, such as an investment group in New York.

And then, there were two versions of the top-secret study, with one meant for the industry to comment on, the other for the SEC to implement, regardless of the comments of the industry.

Yes, except blame those thousands of CAP plan holders if they think that the same conspiracy continues to this day.

***

FOR INSTANCE, the SEC-appointed so-called oversight committee for CAP, to its report, claimed that the trust fund of the company was done in P4 billion.

Under SEC rules, the company does not have control over the trust fund. The function belongs to trustee banks.

Contrary to the claim of the SEC oversight committee, the trustee banks reported that the trust fund was in more than P7.3 billion.

I mean, look at that: trust funds and such are the business of banks. They must know what they are doing when it comes to trust funds. That's their job.

As far as trust funds are concerned, the SEC oversight committee, on the other hand, could have been manicurists or something, and we cannot tell the difference.

***

THEN on the leaked news report from the anonymous SEC official, the commissioners seems to take over CAP—listen to this—to "preserve its assets for the planholders from further erosion."

Now, most of the assets of the company is the trust fund are real estate properties, and the property development sector is down at the moment, owing to the up and down cycle inherent in the real estate business.

And there are the assets that the SEC hears could be sealed—some properties that you cannot unload for lack of interested buyers.

See, even a criminal genius can find a way to, or, "erode" land assets. Of course, the anonymous SEC official could be talking about an environmental concern. You know...soil erosion.

In that case, CAP needs scientists and not the SEC management committee.

***

OF COURSE the main basis of the SEC in assuming takeover CAP is the findings of the oversight committee that the company does not have enough assets.

Doors noted that the trust funder disputed the findings.

Let's even assume that, by some miracle, the SEC group is right this time, and its findings and its claims are accurate, and so its takeover has formal basis.

Now, we all know the track record of the government in preserving assets from further erosion. Just take a look at the assets being preserved by the PCGG.

Adds from this: why must the SEC insist on preserving the assets, when the stockholders of CAP are not even taking away money from the company?

On the contrary, the stockholders are even putting more money in the company as advances for the latter's cash-flow problem.

And so is the SEC guarding the CAP assets against raid of stockholders who are putting hundreds of million of pesos into the company? Or is there something else here? I think so, too.

***

IF THE SEC must do anything in CAP, the SEC must preserve more the company's assets from erosion done by the SEC itself.

Years ago, the SEC appointed an oversight committee in CAP, a certain Roberto Manabat, who is now the officer in charge of the SEC non-traditional securities and instruments department. One of the oversight committees at that time, ordered CAP to pay P100,000 a month to the SEC appointed comptroller for CAP, somebody named Maria Ajoun.

Look at that—the standard pay for government appointees is P68,000 a month.

The pay of the finance chief of CAP itself was only P50,000 a month.

Other officers of CAP were getting P50,000 a month.

Senior marketing officers of CAP, which is a marketing heavy outfit, are getting only P30,000 a month.

And you have the SEC people, mandated to protect the interest of the planholders by guarding against erosion of the company assets, setting handsome pay for themselves.

They even fled in Congress about it. During a congressional hearing, Manabat claimed that the SEC appointees were not part of the SEC-comptroller was for two companies, namely CAP and CAP Pension.

Records showed that Ajoun started getting a pay of P100,000 a month starting in May 2003 from CAP and CAP Pension.

It was only a year later when CAP Pension was added to the responsibility.

Manabat did not testify he is Congress. So just did not tell the whole truth. In other countries, public officials go to jail for that.

Personal Finance Section

DISCLOSURES

CENTRALIST (Philippines) Commercial Banking Corp. disclosed that the board appointed Fred S. Custodio as assistant corporate secretary.

VICTORIAS Milling Company Inc. in board accepted the resignation of Renato R. Castillo as director.

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ELECTED officers of Alliance Global Group Inc. were George I. Yang as chairman; Andrew I. Tan as vice chair; Cherlie M. Uanen as president; Cirse G.R. Ming as first vice president for Finance & Corporate Info matters; Winnie Chan-Yeh, Yuan Swanson, Renato M. Pineda as corporate secretary and Florlando G. Tolentino as assistant corporate secretary. Compiled by Evi A.C. Zaremberg, PDI Research

Oil pauses, holds above $67/barrel

Aboitiz to invest P6B in power

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE ABOITIZ Group is setting aside roughly P3 billion to P6 billion for possible investments in power generation over the next three years.

Officials said the group was also studying the possibility of bidding for power plants to be sold by the state-run National Power Corp.

That company in past months intervened to Visayan Electric's hydroelectric plants in Bohol and Biliran, both in Visayas; the 112-megawatt Mauban and 300-megawatt Pantabangan plants in Nueva Ecija and the 728-megawatt Magat plant in Cagayan.

Aboitiz Equity Ventures Corp. executive vice-president and chief operating officer Tomasos Alcantara said the Aboitiz group was conducting due diligence on these plants.

To further solidify its power generation business, the Aboitiz Group, through subsidiary Hydroelectric Development Corp. (Hedcor), is pursuing up a 40-megawatt hydroelectric power plant in Davao.

Aboitiz estimated the project would cost roughly P3.3 billion. Hedcor will start plant construction next year and begin operations in 2008.

ABOITIZ

The Aboitiz Group plans to fund its ventures through the sale of treasury shares and loans.

To date, the group has a cash position of P2.63 billion.

AEV earlier partnered with Norwegian firm SN Power Invest AS to study JAC hydro develop Singapore's hydroelectric assets that have been lined up for privatization.

AEV, through Hedcor, is the country's largest mini-hydro development firm, controlling more than P1.3 billion worth of hydropower generation assets.

It was recently the first power company to win the bidding for a Negrosse asset.

It was recently back last year the awardee for the 3.5-megawatt (MW) Talomo mini-hydro facility in Davao for P137 million.

AEV has interests in power generation, power distribution, banking, food and transportation.

SN Power, on the other hand, is engaged in the development and operation of hydropower projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The company's two founding partners, Statkraft and the Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries (Norfund), grant it the necessary technical and financial backbone to develop hydropower facilities in various countries.

Oil prices were acting as a check on budding optimism about Japan's economic prospects, analysts say.

Industrial output announced on Thursday rose to and rarely that industries and material it had complete control over its economy, seeking to clean up investor confidence battered by a falling currency and deflationary oil prop.

But fears of a full-blown crisis have emerged as surging oil prices are dealing a double-blow in the Indonesian economy.

Broadcast promoters, whose attacks dashed oil exports from the South American trade powerhouse, are also the first to feel energy pangs since Thursday in which the Opec agreed to increase more in the poor communities where they operate.

Output from state oil firm Petroconsider climbed back to 150,000 bpd on Thursday, but was still under the 200,000-bpd average it pumped before the attacks.

In another sign of easing concerns, Nigerian blue-collar oil workers' union (NUPENG) would not hold oil exports even if it joins any general strike called to protest an expected increase in local fuel prices, a union leader told Reuters on Thursday.

Petroconsider government attempts to raise prices have led to crippling general strikes in the world's fifth-largest oil exporter. Reuters

Gov't warned against . . .

A proposal to do away with the oil deregulation law was earlier formally rebuffed by the government, which ordered most bureaucrats of addressing the oil problem through conservation.

Ibalao, Malacañang called on the public to conserve energy, even forcing government agencies to cut down on fuel expenses.

At Customs bureau, a one-stop shop for securing import permits

By Michelle V. Perez

[illegible] to do away with costly business procedures, Malacañang will soon issue an executive order that will create a one-stop shop within the Bureau of Customs for businesses wanting to secure import permits.

The one-stop shop will pave the way for synchronized processing by concerned government agencies of documents the BOC requires to approve exports for importation, and dictionaries diversity, BOC officers in charge.

"The draft EO is now at the DOF for clearing and then it will be submitted to Malacañang for approval and issuance," Arevalo told reporters.

The BOC chief explained that under the executive order, government agencies would be electronically hooked up.

Importers will have to submit documents required by government agencies only to the BOC's one-stop shop. The leaders would go to the agencies only to file requests and pay the necessary fees.

This will address the delays in the release of import permits for some of the inefficiencies process of getting clearance from concerned agencies, Arevalo said.

Traders expect to resume poultry exports to Japan

By Christine R. Gaylican

SHARING of the Philippine declaration of Bird flu-free Japan, hoping to recover the losses they incurred when the trade was temporarily halted two months ago.

Local broiler companies San Miguel Foods Inc., Swift Foods Inc., Universal Robina Corp. and Vitarich Corp. reported that they lost an estimated $13 to $12 million, or about P600 million, in potential revenues when it voluntarily halted the import of processed chicken to Japan due to an isolated case of bird flu in the Philippines.

The situation are confident Japan will remove the ban on Philippine chicken products, saying that Japan cannot refuse its chicken requirements from countries that reportedly have a high incidence of bird flu.

[illegible] spokesperson Rodeo Bacsal said the chicken exporters would continue to lobby for the lifting of the ban in Japan.

"We intend the good news to Japan," Pascual said. "The period from July to October is when consumption of chicken is highest. What we missed is certainly there to stay for a while."

He said exporting companies from the Philippines have resumed their petition through diplomatic channels.

They are urging the Embassy of Japan to allow the Philippines to resume exporting chicken products.

The Philippine government, through the Department of Agriculture, has requested a certification from the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) declaring the Philippines to be free of the bird flu.

Last June, a case of bird flu was reported in a duck farm in Bulacan. It turned out that the case involved the low pathogenic H5N1 strain and not the deadly H5N1 strain that had killed more than 50 people across Southeast Asia.

BUSINESS

BSP expected to increase interest rates

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is said to be having difficulty in finding all monetary tightening because of rising interest rates in the United States and continuing high inflation rate.

The BSP's Monetary Board voted to keep its overnight rates steady for the fourth consecutive month during the policy session on Thursday. But some economists believe the restrictive stance may not be able to hold on to the same figures for long.

"It may be difficult for the BSP to hold its key rate steady given the US Fed doubled the latter's continued hike in their bench interest rate to between 4 percent and 4.25 percent by yearend," said Emma Fonte, an economist at Bank of Commerce Banking Corp.

Helping the BSP in keeping its rates steady are the healthy levels of last season and the remittances of overseas Filipino workers, Fonte said.

"But still the oil price threat remains," she added. "In the event oil prices fall over, the peso will remain under pressure. The BSP may have to preempt speculators or banks on the economy by setting rates before liquidity does not become an additional constricting factor to inflation."

Mining, agri yields to boost GDP

MINING BY CANDLELIGHT
A candle lights the way for a miner digging for gold in Nueva de Oro, Cagayan Province. The Philippines says it will rely on GDP growth to depend not in the entry of mining investments and expected gains in agriculture. REUTERS

By Michelle V. Remo

THE ECONOMY can still achieve the growth target of 5-6 percent this year as the expected pickup in output by the agriculture sector and the entry of mining investments may offset the ill effects of high oil prices on the economy, the National Economic and Development Authority said.

The agriculture sector, whose record growth of 3.6 percent already took into account the impact of the El Niño weather disturbances, is expected to post a higher growth rate of 4.7 percent in the second half with improved weather conditions, said Ingrid Santos, Neda director general.

"Agriculture should produce a pretty fair share (this) especially in the fourth quarter," Santos said in a media forum.

Agriculture accounts for about a fifth of the economy's total output and employs a third of the country's workforce.

Santos also pointed to the mining sector, the three quarters of which is open to almost additional foreign investments in the second half.

The suspension by as of December 2004 of 23 new mining contracts worth $239.7 million had already been pointed to have the measure lost most of a Supreme Court ruling opening up the mining sector to foreign investments.

The economic chief economic planner said the Philippines needed to record a gross domestic product (GDP) growth of between 6.8 and 8 percent in the second half of the year to attain the 5.5-6.5 percent GDP growth targeted for 2005.

GDP is the value of all goods and services produced by an economy in a given period.

Besides on the economy's ability to meet its GDP growth target for the year were raised after a slowdown was noted in the first quarter. During the period, the economy grew by 4.9 percent, dropping off from the 6.4 percent of the previous year.

The unexpected drop in consumer spending and low capital outflows on the economy's ability to meet its economic growth target for the year. The Philippines, which exports about 50 percent of its crude oil requirements, has been reeling from increased oil prices taken in the international market.

Interest rate hikes by and investment returns were also likely to grow by 4.6 and 6.6 percent, respectively, in the second half.

Metro Pacific seeks control of Skyway project

By Clarissa S. Robles

METRO PACIFIC Corp. made a big pre-stake as it not bid control of the Skyway project, hoping to turn around the finances of the ailing highway system under the control of Indonesian tycoons the company's top official said.

Jose Ma. Gas, company president, said Metro Pacific made an offer early this year to take over Skyway's finances, including the loans it had incurred and which had gone sour, in exchange for a bigger stake in the project.

"I am not sure if our offer, if accepted, would give us majority [control], but definitely we will be more than 50 percent," Gas said.

The Skyway is a 9.8-kilometer elevated highway running from Magallanes to Buendia. It is owned by Citra Marga Nusaphala Persada Corp., a joint venture of Indonesian Gas Bill Citra Lintasan Daya Mandiri and the government Philippine National Construction Corp.

Alfonso Reddit, chairman of Citra Marga Nusaphala Persada Corp. through Metro Pacific Investments Holdings Inc.

Super

Yam and the Restless

PHOTO by Jaymes Gabrillo

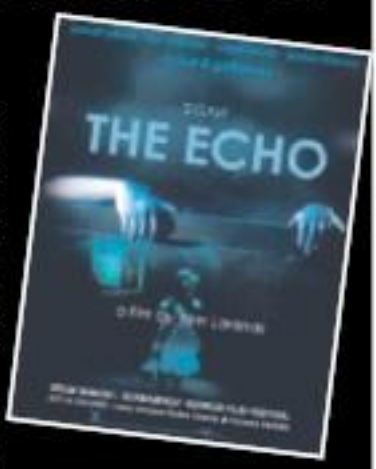
By James Gabrillo and Pepe Diokno

A LOT of people say that the great Filipino dream is to make it abroad. You can choose to take that in the negative sense—tons of people leave our shores everyday with hope of better lives for themselves, and dreams of one day forgetting they were ever in this beautiful country (though it sometimes seems like a miserable hellhole).

But there are Pinoys who, like other people across the globe, hope to make it abroad so that their message gets heard by more people. One of those people is filmmaker Yam Laranas. You probably saw his movie, "Sigaw" last December—and it probably creeped the hell out of you.

Do you want good news? In a few weeks, people from America and Europe are going to have the same chance that we did. And it looks like *sigaws* are going to be coming out of their mouths.

Sigaw which has been retitled "The Echo" for international audiences will be screened at the Screamfest LA International Horror Film Festival from Oct. 14-23 at the Loews Universal Studios Cinemas along the Universal City Walk. This is where the Japanese "The Grudge" and Korean "A Tale of Two Sisters" made their Western debut.



Filmmaker Yam Laranas' 'Sigaw' is so loud it echoes. This I Am Super! Awardee makes it to Hollywood

Super marketing for 'Sigaw'

Yam and webmaster Chuck Gutierrez marketed the film abroad. But they didn't go on an interview-feature blitz like most Pinoy films do—well, they didn't have the money. What they did was cheap—and incredibly, super smart.

"I accidentally bumped into this issue of Fortune magazine, and on the cover was something like, *Bloggers, the Next Powerful Voice*. And I said, sh** this guy is right! So we connected with the bloggers. Everywhere in the States, we'd search for their sites. And it spread like boom! And it caught the attention of the film critics. That's how fast it was. Then we'd send the screeners on DVD. We spent not even 1/10 of the budget of most promos—it's just Fedex, that's it," says Yam.

Yam believes in the power of how little things can be made big by just making them simple. For him, these simple ideas are the things that break better, as they connect well with audiences.

He adds, "Often there's too much talk—and it doesn't mean anything anymore. The buzz we did with *Sigaw* was not that noisy, but it buzzed to the right ears."

Path to Hollywood

But the real breaking news is this: International Creative Management (ICM), the biggest and most powerful talent agency in the world, has signed up Yam to be a part of their roster of talents—the first time such a privilege has been extended to a Filipino filmmaker.

How'd it all happen? Yam tells us, "My good friend Roy Lee (executive producer of the American remakes of "The Ring," "The Grudge," and "Dark Water") was passing out screeners of *Sigaw*—without even telling me. And Rachel Belofsky, the organizer of Screamfest was talking to several agents and managers telling them about the movie. One day, Roy emails—'Yam, I gave your screener to Renee Cap of ICM—' I was like, oh sh** ! 'She's asking about you. I'm giving her your contacts.' And one day she emailed, 'Hi Yam. Your friend, Roy Lee, told me about you. Can you send me a screener right away?'—and I sent it, P1,500 for Fedex—f*** the P1,500, 'di ba? She got it, and then sent me a message saying, 'I haven't finished it, but what I've seen so far scared the sh** out of me, can you call me up 7 a.m. Manila time?'

"That day I also got an email from Roy saying, 'Renee told me that she's seen parts of the film and she got so scared that she had to drag her brother to watch the film with her.'

"So the next day I call her and say, 'You know, I have good news for you—we got

YAM/C2

"THE ECHO" garnered higher ratings than "Fantastic Four" and "The Island" from Hollywood critics, with three and a half stars out of five.

HELMUT Krauch, festival director of Cinekids in Cologne, Germany, said Yam, "We desperately want to include 'The Echo' in our festival this year."

Yam and the Restless

From page C1

good reviews..." And she goes, "No, no Yam. Stop telling it to me. We're signed up." And I go, "How does it go?" She answers, "It's just a handshake. For a handshake in Hollywood is a handshake. You break it, we break you." Awesome, right?"

Young Yam

Flashback to Yam's younger days, when things weren't all happy happy joy joy for him. As a kid, he wanted to do a lot of things at the same time—writing poetry, painting, music. He even studied dancing with Agnes Locsin, but "then we regret now..."

Yam's mom once asked him, "What do you want to do, Million? You can't do all of these things together." And then, he discovered the wonders of film. He recalls, "I wanted to act, I was into an apprentice for Johnny Delgado and Jaime Salinas. That was 1997. They flunked me. Then I discovered Mindforce. In fact, when I first enrolled in Mindforce, after my first course in film someone told me, 'You have no talent in film. You better go back to Davao.'"

Yam breaks in

We talked to Yam about how we love his strong sense of atmosphere and asked how he acquired that.

"I grew up a happy kid. But in Davao, everyday there's a blackout—so we'd sit out the candles. The ghosts, and I'd love the lighting of that—like the theme of it. And in Davao, you see, just go killing, on-lib, ngo, and that inspired me, so I grew up in that environment."

Such, so, well, the future of Yam—he's excited that KBO is starting to open their doors to more talents from our country. He dream is through his work that he the right doors in these producers...he will be able to send the message that there's superb talents here.

"This really excites me, because I want someone else on fellow...not my face, oops, but in that direction. That's a way we can show it—'cause there's no much politics in the Philippines. And it's sad because a lot of our filmmakers here are doing so here their products (down) abroad—but they're stuck in the here—the politics, the corruption, mostly. Partly because they don't wanna explore other subjects, or else they think that going to commercial is a bad thing to do. If you remain 'indie'—like, you very down often to distribute your film, 'cause you're 'indie'—you're losing your audience. The reason why I'm interested in my own little way is because I have the spirit of an indie director—I do my cinematography, I do half of my editing, I write, I've done music. That's what indie is. But it's a good thing I have the money from producers. But it just so happens that if you get an audience, you break in the box office. I don't give a sh** about that, but the important thing is that people are watching. You know, like Gogh killed himself to get noticed. Beethoven could where he wasn't able to hear the applause. Indie for 'indie's' sake, yes. But indie for the sake of 'suffering artist,' for the sake of being one, it's bullsh**. I'm sorry. But again they're scared of by people who approach them. Or maybe they're afraid of their product being compared with. But there's always two things wrong—yes or no."

He caps off by saying, "We're starting something here. We're opening up. We'll never know what can come out of this."

Yam don't forget.

Musings of a New-Moneyed Masochist

Freeloaders Exposed

By Dryasdog.com
Original artwork by JasonWee

PEOPLE use and abuse other people for a wide variety of reasons under the sun: politicians abusing their constituents to gain even more power, reformed prostitutes publicly lambasting other B-list celebrities to gain publicity for their so-called "acting" careers, social mountaineers (god I love this term) using old-moneyed souls to propel their positions in the social strata.

Use and abuse also happens to the normal, average cotizenzen such as you and me. You've got the "sur force" using the "soft force" for monetary gain, people who befriend members of the "beautiful class" to unleash their own physical insecurities and of course, members of the privatized, freeloading ruling class who offer "free-and-stupid" to men so they have anything under the sound "free" in it—free beats, free food, free clothes, free makeup, free drugs, free living space, free everything.

Now, for those who don't know it, freeloading is the act of taking advantage of the generosity of someone. Below a "freeloader" is someone who practices freeloading.

Speaking of freeloaders, one prime example is a certain jack of all trades, master of none "fashion designer/ pundit/artist" whose company posts make me look like I stole my character from an elephant. Posts pix from Victorinox subscription and bathrooms, alternated Louis Vuitton purses bragging that no one he had dissed "repented" in Hong Kong but my instinct says those bags got a one-way ticket to where this man doesn't exist, be it the epidemic of freeloading madness.

What's funny too is the fact that this "fashion designer/pundit/artist" in mental cruelty with yet another former freeloading friend of mine (a former up & coming young designer) who stalks the supply for an additional cellular phone fees under my name and promised me that he'd pay such fine monthly if I GAVE him the sim card. Several bills and collection letters later, I eventually sicced up fronting his bills—thanks, at that time, I could've spent my last wedding shoe hunting.

As a householder, 30-year-old (plus five, don't tell anyone) who has been (ruined) over the years by a quite a few freeloading friends, here are some musings for you to ponder if you want to attract such features of today's society.

Admit it—everybody loves a freeloader!

1. Be incredibly generous but never expect anything back.

Freeloader knows freeloading (read: Hamton Ay number) that receiving is worth, much, much, much better than giving. I mean, if it's money from heaven, it's still manna. Or should I say it's still from heaven?

But in order for the best freeloaders to work, one has to be incredibly generous and learn not to expect anything back. It opens the doors to richness and goodness who are willing to reward you for the moment you take off your shirt and flash the breast while once in the shape of a pure ego-swarting your mammalian address.

A freeloader's worst nightmare is the stingy penny-pinching neighbor that you have next door. If you're not generous, who will be?

Being generous won't make you a freeloader—you say sleep with that knowledge. However, giving in to an order to receive (or expecting to receive) is just like Arthur's Mr. Adviser Lance is to the Machiavellian. But I have to concede and give you bromides credits because such practice, as deliberate darkness, requires real manipulation (aka social skills).

2. Let them abuse your generosity over time.

It definitely takes time for someone to abuse your generosity—it could be weeks, months or even years. Freeloaders and Cretefied A-1-1-1 Circle Hustle contestants like to befriend, suck and fool their prey in acute bait-and-switch.

It could start from a party favor thing like being constantly asked to get them into your favorite nightclub for free to getting their name in free house. From there, it will evolve into a position where it involves something "you can't do now"—money or prized possessions being borrowed etc.—who knows, it could be your lover, too.

Any respectable human being who receives but who gives incomparably, of course) to the form of reciprocation is NOT a freeloader. Heck, it could even be as simple as "graduate gratitude," but trust me though, those days, it's a phrase awkward to be exercised. Blame it on the weak exchange rate my darlings.

3. I promise this, I promise that.

It's the beginning, God created heaven and earth. And God said, let there be light: and there was light. A freeloader is a sore examinee: light every time he/she borrows something from you—blinding light in the form of failed promises and failed returns, that is.

Team me. I'd be unwilling (but REALLY-under-Mayor-Kangaroo) if I got a FREEfight from every time I have the phrase "I promise I'll pay/give it to you back."

4. The more the merrier

No, it's not just Paris Hilton sending the Kiehl's goodie bags by the truckload in hamchess. You guys include her brother, her cousin (up) her assistants, her assistants' assistants, hair and makeup, etc.

Why settle for one dog to suck your blood (as well as your bank account) dry if freeloader is more about. They come in pairs, threesomes or even groups. They're just like the whole Scorpion/ I-will-only-sting-you-once to-ask you up upon your arrival at the airport.

Keep in mind that all it takes is one single cretin (with a freeloader) and the rest of the cretin-each gang will follow a la Pied Piper of Malabia to Joe's quiet hotel.

Money, money, money … money!

In closure, whoever said the "love things in life are free" should be banned in the deepest, darkest cesspit of hell because I, Bryanboy, think the best things in life are the ones paid for by my hard earned buns.

As for friendship… well…

Let's just say so long as it's a friendship paid for by somebody else, then I'm fine. Fine cleft for me.

Until anyone!
Bibbedi!

Crazy sexy shoes

Raymond Abrenica's Thornby Manila is guerrilla footwear for 21st century nomads

By Gino de la Paz

OUR GENERATION is a passionate, creative breed, driven by taking our dreams and inspirations from vision to reality. Whether it's music, fashion, film, or technology, our ideas are bound together in one grueling taxonomy, little kid's world of possibilities.

So the brains behind Thornby, a homegrown line of locally Philippine-made footwear, Raymond Abrenica believes we're on to something entrepreneurial because we're all about pushing what we know—sometimes in fun, before you subdued the brand—or should I say, the anti-brand—for today's global nomads.

After nabbing his degree in Entrepreneurship and Communication Technology at Ateneo, realizing you pursue your passion, Abrenica set his mind on footwear. "I'm not a coloured-inside-the-lines kind of person. Backpacked on 14 countries in three years, I've always been fascinated by shoes," he says.

Abrenica's footwear collection is a mix of sporty, casual, and dressy shoes with styles that reflect his multi-ideologies. "I'm inspired by a lot of things. Street style—I'm totally what we're looking here, the social climate, the cognitive, our invisible life, and watch by the Chronicle Archives, Under Bridge Runners' and Melrose. And maybe camera. Everyone who can see in your something."

So why they should be confused, Raymond's shoes are meant after what he calls "the global underground—people who still have no office on your prerequisites, and what you're about to wear next year." He gives props to the people behind the scenes for lugging a pair of rare shoes. "Cousins," after Pemech Gagner's grab relative Carine Sandal. That there are also nail-level, sick, chaps about he calls "bats," after playing-caption here van Lamoureaux, which for a [illegible] somewhere [illegible] and, though the one we're [illegible] a very wild kind, Philip [illegible] will be [illegible] kick-through scale-around-the-temperature-zones in Boardroom leather chic-trend—[illegible] to Philip."

The most rewarding technique she digs for Bonds Bonds' bonus for Detail and would love to watch the Stephen Gan of Mountain and 9 Magazine. "I get inspired by what these people have or are trying to accomplish," Raymond knowingly-nudes.

About cultural exchange

Mr. his to dream shoes. Scratch that. "Can I say Gardner Ackon and Mocky Rawsun?" Raymond begins. What knows, right? But now the Thornby pilot collection is being stepped up by handsome, cool mens and, surprisingly, kids who live on an allowance. "It's a unique billboard shoe types collection to supporters. Runs anyone with sneaker? And yes, global nomads?"

But why the moniker? "Because Thornby sounds organic, fun, personal and social. I embrace global cosmopolitan with the Internet and cheap travel, it's all about cultural exchange! Last year, I saw a real cool bunch in super casual circuit in the airport."

Connect the dots

Featured updated awkward shapes like sandals, driving moccasins, sandals and loafers, making them perfect for the dance floor as well as the departure lounge. "We chose our casual, I believe we can move around clothes, the type you can wear to airport undercover after two days's dinner... or sex. They're simultaneously rustic and polished, old and new, in with and organic. Common mode-life more interesting, it does to stand out and enjoy it, which we're all special and I want you to have an interesting mix of work something natural." Hence the name—the imported leather, stacked heels, socks—and colors collect how special and interesting Filipino-craft-something is.

"Creativity knows no limitations," Raymond finally says. "Everything is readily available, just connect the dots!" You can see there's love in the work because he still believes in the Filipino's brilliance in creation and artistry. "I let [in the shoes to [illegible] my imagining because of Chinese, Hitler more majestic and super fun into fashion. But kids should be able to find a sweet spot, maybe layered expansion...I think it's more of taking cues from his culture, meaning a passion into a business," he [illegible] Trump and Thorny re-incorporated is taking more from life."

And that, dear kiddies, was consensus on behalf of a recent college graduate.

Thornby is available at Soul in Greenbelt 3, (632) 757-1942 and 843-847 in C. (632) 886 2882 and Bilocity in the Shangri-La Mall. Suggestions? email pinoy@pinoy.ph or 911-1000. Contact Raymond Abrenica or call +63917 [illegible], +63 [illegible] and/or (632)807 [illegible] E-mail thornbymanila@gmail.com

Fitting pretty

What kind of shoe are you?

By Chariel Miles
Photos by Rafael Benoza
All shoes from Penny De Bonis Bag

BELIEVE it or not, your shoes can say so much about you.

Your flip flops give away your laid-back lifestyle, your high-heeled pumps boost your confidence, so how can we tell what your footwear says about you?

We went about every single day of our lives, and whether we like it or not, each shoe has its own distinct personality. Your choice of footwear can affect your mood.

So scan the halls of our schools, the lobby of our offices and the entrances of clubs wearing those, and people's personalities—whether you're wearing those flavors does for another or expensive or your various for high-heels.

I like how shoes are also [illegible] your casual wear are treated poses. I love [illegible] I'm not really into losing every single coloured shoe collection. I'm happy with my white sneakers and [illegible] they are to the happy uniform as well.

In school, I observed a lot of [illegible] shoes. Ballet [illegible] wearing skateboarding shoes, the flip flops crowd who come in the [illegible] on summer beach mode, the rich kids with their [illegible] sneakers and the [illegible] "Mean Girls" who go to Thursday class with their high-heeled pumps.

There are different kinds of shoes for [illegible] and Pinoy Pride makes sure we have access to [illegible] mouth [illegible].

Whether your idea of fun is partying or curling up with a good read, whether your calendar runs in Paris or Ipanema, whether your shroud's footfall a bongo pulsing or taking in cultural, there's bound to be a shoe that would let your powers be.

So what's it to a pair—or ten